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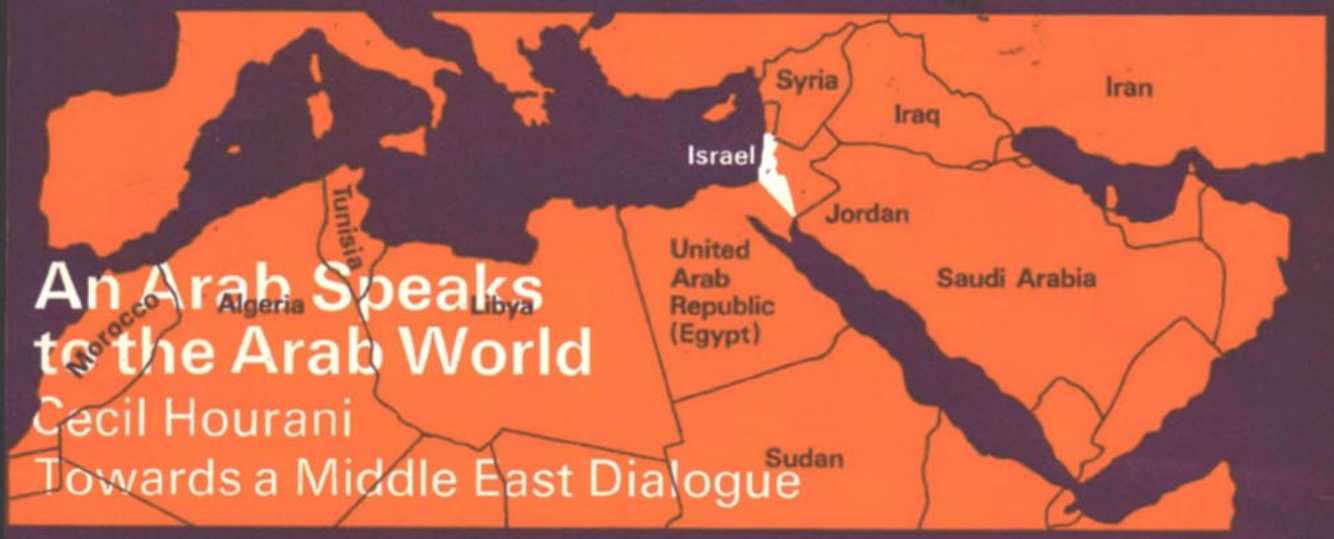
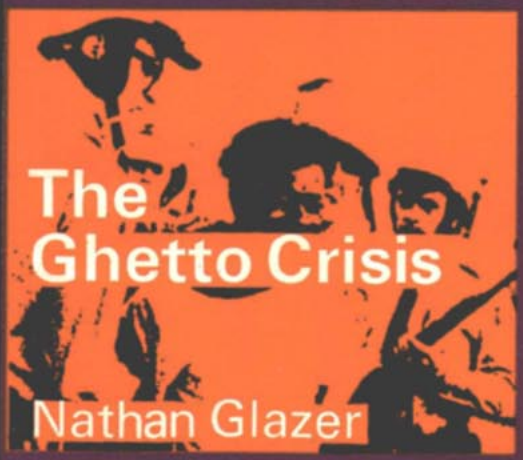


An Arab Speaks to the Arab World

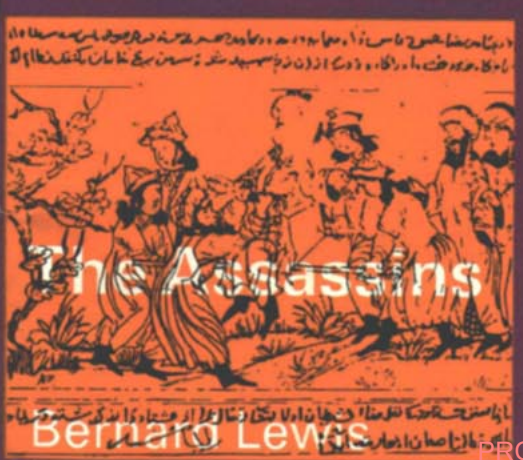
Cecil Hourani

Towards a Middle East Dialogue



The Ghetto Crisis

Nathan Glazer



The Assassins

Bernard Lewis

When Everything Falls Apart . . . (short story)

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Remembering Huey Long

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The Idea of an Intellectual Public

Melvin J Lasky

Why Newspapers have Readers

Christopher Driver

Theatre Hits, Runs, Errors

Henry Popkin

Totalitarians

Richard Lowenthal

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Cecil Hourani

The Moment of Truth

Towards a Middle East Dialogue

THIS ESSAY *is addressed to the educated classes in the Arab countries: to those who still participate actively in the political, social, and intellectual life of their countries, and to those who have been excluded forcibly or by their own free will. To all I trust it will have a message of hope. Destructive as much of my argument is, my aim is positive and constructive. On the understanding of our errors in the past may be built the new society of the future. I have no recrimination against states or individuals. Time and history will provide their own judgment. The moment is one for solidarity and mutual tolerance, and above all for a free discussion among ourselves. In a climate of honest self-criticism and free expression those truths may emerge which can lead us from our present disarray to a new vision of ourselves and the world we would like to build.*

AT THIS MOMENT when the destiny of the Arab nation is being decided, it is the duty of every Arab thinker to witness to the truth as he sees it, without fear and without dissimulation. For too long has the field of publicity and expression been left in the hands of professional demagogues, blackmailers, and semi-educated fanatics. Our silence on the one hand, their vociferation on the other, have led the Arab nation not merely to disaster, but to the brink of disintegration.

The primary condition of a redressment of this situation is to see things as they are, in all their brutal clarity: then to take action to change them in the light of the ideals and objectives we set ourselves. A victory over ourselves is more important than a physical defeat on the battlefield. Governments, states, régimes, frontiers, are all transient things, subject to fluctuations and fortune. What is important is that a people should survive, not as a mere agglomeration of individuals, but as a living, creative force in history. We can only survive by acting positively ourselves, not by reacting negatively to what others may do, or seek to do, to us.

History has given to the Arab nation in the 20th century a unique chance to return to the community of living creative forces in the world: a conjunction of international affairs which made possible the independence of all our territories; and the discovery of enormous wealth which with almost no effort on our part gives us the means to accomplish all we need to refashion our society and to raise it to prosperity and progress.

This unique chance we are now in danger of losing. Our sovereign and political liberty gives us the means to bring about our own destruction more easily than we can construct our future. Our very freedom implies dangers greater than existed when we were dependent. No one will now save us from the consequences of our own mistakes and follies, except ourselves. The fact that we inhabit certain territories in this world of strategic importance or material wealth is not a sufficient guarantee of our safety or survival. We can be driven from

CECIL HOURANI *was for ten years a close adviser to President Bourguiba of Tunisia. He was founder and director of the International Cultural Centre of Hammamet (Tunisia). As he writes us from Beirut, "My article was first published in Arabic as a special supplement to* el-Nahar, *which is the best and largest Arabic newspaper in the Lebanon and also perhaps the best daily paper in the Arab world today. I think it has already contributed to opening up the great debate on the future of Palestine which is now going on in the Arab mind.... Evidence for this was clear at the recent conference in Khartoum and in some of the resolutions adopted at the Arab 'Summit.'..."*

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these territories, or lose control of these riches. We can commit suicide as a nation. And history will then judge us as a people who did not know how to use the chances which had been offered them, and condemn us to the fate we shall have deserved.

THE MOST DRAMATIC, but not the only, example of our weakness, and of our failure to recognise both our weakness and our strength, lies in our relationship with the Zionist movement and with the State of Israel.

We have been able neither to come to terms with them: nor to destroy them: nor even to contain them.

As a result of our failure to decide what position to adopt, or to take the necessary measures of self-defence, we have allowed Israel to usurp the whole of Palestine, and to occupy the most important strategic positions in the Near East.

While it is true that the Zionist movement did not develop wholly in relationship to the Arab world, but also in an international climate outside our control, nevertheless since the establishment of Israel in 1948, against our will, our struggle against that State has taken place within the framework of the international community, and largely within the United Nations Organisation. The frontiers established in 1948 as a result of the cease-fire were not wholly advantageous to Israel, because they set a territorial limit to Zionism.

The Arab objective, therefore, if we had thought clearly and calmly, should have been the *containment of Israel* within its boundaries as limited by *de facto* arrangements arrived at after two wars we had lost, rather than its conquest and destruction.

That we were unable to distinguish clearly between containment and conquest was due primarily to a psychological weakness in us: *that which we do not like we pretend does not exist*. Because we refused to recognise a situation which was distasteful to us, we were unable to define our own relationship to that situation, or to distinguish between what we would have liked ideally, and what we were capable of achieving in practice.

As a policy of containment, the moves of the U.A.R. until 5 June 1967 could have been successful. But it had implicit dangers, the greatest of which was that in the minds of those who were practising it, it could be at any moment transformed successfully into a policy of conquest. By this confusion in their own minds about their aims, and by their misjudgment of their own strength, the Arab Governments brought about the disaster of June 5. They also lost the battle of public opinion. By foolish and irresponsible statements they allowed themselves to appear as the aggressor instead of the victims. While they talked of war and conquest, Israel prepared it.

For years Israel had cultivated the image of herself as a small defenceless State surrounded by heavily-armed neighbours bent on destroying her. While in fact we were trying to contain her, some of our spokesmen, for home consumption, were exaggerating our military capacities and promising our people conquests. This gave Israel a pretext for arming to the teeth. The balance of power which Israel was trying to maintain was not one between Israel and Egypt, but between Israel and all her neighbours combined. The higher technical skills of the Israelis, and the integration of her armed forces into her civilian population, combined with supplies of arms qualitatively at least equal to those of the Arabs, in fact gave her an advantage which we should have foreseen.

THE GREATEST DEFEAT, however, was not that on the battlefield or in propaganda and public opinion, but that which our Governments inflicted on their own people: countless lives lost uselessly; a great new exodus of refugees from their homes; economic losses and misery not yet calculable; a new despair and a new humiliation.

What greater proof of our capacities for self-deception and moral cowardice than that Ahmed Shouqairi still sits with our responsible leaders, or the claims of one Arab Head of State that we were not defeated because we did not use our full strength? Does not all this make one suspect that the "final victory" of which some talk would be nothing less than a *coup de grâce* delivered to the Arabs?

This is indeed our moment of truth: but some of our leaders cannot make up their minds whether they want to be Torero or Bull!

ANOTHER CONSEQUENCE of our unwillingness to accept as real what we do not like is that *when reality catches up with us, it is always too late.* At every *débâcle* we regret that we did not accept a situation which no longer exists. In 1948 we regretted that we had not accepted the 1947 U.N. plea for partition. In May 1967 we were trying to go back to pre-Suez. Today we

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would be happy—and are actually demanding the U.N.—to go back to things as they were before 5 June. From every defeat we reap a new regret and a new nostalgia, but never seem to learn a new lesson.

Yet every human situation—except annihilation—contains within it the seeds of its final reversal. Take for example the creation of Israel in 1948. It is true that in relation to our right to the total possession of Palestine this represented an Arab loss: but there were also gains to us in what happened in 1948. We won independence for part of Palestine in place of total dependence on the Mandatory Power before. Under the Mandatory Régime, Jewish immigration and the expansion of Zionism could have continued in the whole of Palestine: after 1948 Zionism was confined to a tiny territory which was strategically weak and scarcely viable economically. Had we consolidated the independence we had gained, we could have contained Israel, and with it World Zionism, for fifty years, after which Israel itself would have ceased to be a threat to us, and become just another Levantine state, part Jewish, part Arab, but overwhelmingly Oriental.

Instead of which, twenty years later, we have not only lost what remained of Arab Palestine: we have also helped Zionism to leap forward yet another stage in its dynamic progress towards full Jewish nationalism. The enormous material and moral support which the State of Israel received from Jewish citizens of other countries in the recent crisis shows that what extremist Zionists have always hoped, and moderate Jews always feared, is happening: namely the polarisation of Jewish nationalism around the State of Israel, and the progressive alienation of Jews from the societies in which they have been assimilated or at least accepted. The potential population of Israel is thus not the unborn generations in that country alone, but Jews from everywhere in the world.

Shall we in one, or ten, or twenty years, seek another "victory" like the one we have just gained, and lose the other side of the Jordan, the fertile plains of Jaulan and Hauran in Syria, and the Litani and Hasbani rivers in Lebanon? And shall we still have Ahmed Shouqairi with us to consecrate the final victory of stupidity over intelligence, of fanaticism over common sense, of dishonesty over truth?

THE ANSWER lies with us. What we do in reaction to the events of the last few weeks will determine the future of our people not for ten or twenty years, but for centuries. This time there can be no second chance. Either we continue on the same road that has led us to our present state, defeats, retreats, *débâcles*, and the rapid transformation of our settled urban and peasant populations in the Near East into a new nomadism: or we take positive measures to stop the process of disintegration, to limit the collapse, and to transform our military defeat into a political and a psychological victory.

What are these positive measures, and what are the psychological victories we may hope to gain?

WE MUST first of all ask ourselves the question, what does victory mean in terms of our actual situation and our real strength? Does it mean victory over others—Israel, or the Anglo-Americans, or Western imperialism or international indifference, or all together? Does it mean we can impose our terms on others, draw frontiers as we want, dictate the conditions on which we agree to live with the rest of the world, and make others see us as we would like to see ourselves?

Our first effort must surely be to win a victory over ourselves: over defeatism on the one hand, extremism on the other. These two dangers are in fact intimately linked together. The real defeatists are not those who look facts in the face, accept them, and try to remedy the situation which brought them about, but those who refuse to do this, who deny facts, and who are thus preparing for new defeats.

The extremists are those who argue that our concepts were correct, but that we did not implement them seriously: and that therefore we should continue along the same path, but use more violent methods.

If, however, our concepts were wrong, the use of the same methods even in a more violent form can only lead us to another defeat. It is therefore essential to re-think our basic ideas in terms of *reality*, rather than of wishes. What could we realistically hope to achieve?

Ourselves and Israel

I HAVE POINTED OUT the disastrous effects of not having formulated clearly in our minds the distinction between the containment and the conquest of Israel. The principal reason why we did not make this distinction, and imagined

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that we could at any moment switch from one to the other, was our failure to appreciate our own strength and weakness relatively to Israel and the rest of the world. We must therefore examine this question honestly and fearlessly.

1. The first basic truth we must face is that the Arabs as a whole do not yet have the scientific and technological skills, nor the general level of education among the masses, which make possible the waging of large-scale modern warfare. This is not merely a deduction from recent events: it is a statistically demonstrable fact. We do not have the educational facilities or standards at home, nor enough students abroad, to provide the General Staff, the officers, and the men capable of using modern weapons and modern methods. Nor do we have civilian populations sufficiently disciplined and educated to collaborate with the armed forces and the civil authorities to the degree which modern warfare demands.

By not recognising this fact, our military leaders tried to fight the wrong kind of war. It is a classical accusation made against General Staffs that they use methods appropriate to the previous war. Our military thinkers and planners were trying to fight the next one. As a result our soldiers were not only unable to use the modern weapons that were placed in their hands: they were actually handicapped by them. Trapped in the tanks they could not manoeuvre, relying on the air support that never came, they fell easy victims to their enemies. And the material they had to abandon will be incorporated into the army of Israel, so that in fact we have helped to arm our opponents.

2. The second truth is that the rate of technological and scientific advance is so rapid in the modern world that even if in twenty years we can catch up with the military standards of today, we shall still be outdistanced by the Israelis, whose technological and scientific skills are the product not only of their own schools and research institutes, but of Jewish—and non-Jewish—talent throughout the world.

3. The third truth is that even if we had been able to defeat Israel militarily, we would have been deprived of the fruit of that victory by some of the Great Powers, who would have intervened to save Israel's political existence.

4. The fourth truth is that in twenty years, or even less, even if we succeed in bringing our scientific and technological skills to a point where we could wage a modern war, warfare itself will have taken on quite another aspect. The possession of nuclear weapons by smaller powers—including the Arab States and Israel—will offer a choice either of mutual annihilation or of international control: and in neither case shall we be able to get our own way on our own terms.

It is evident, therefore, that if we think primarily in terms of military power we shall be making a fundamental error. This does not mean that we should disarm. It does mean that we must re-appraise our own strength, and find a new relationship between military power on the one hand, and our political, economic, and geopolitical assets on the other.

WHAT ARE THE CONCLUSIONS we should draw from these facts about our relationship to Israel? We must first of all realise that the immediate consequence of the present war has been to modify the strategic situation in favour of Israel, which has now reached more natural frontiers than she had before both for defence and attack. If therefore we try to rectify this situation by military force, we shall be in an even weaker position than we were in 1948, in 1956, or before 5 June 1967. And not only are we in a weaker position to attack: we are also less able to defend ourselves.

The conclusions to be drawn are two: in the first place, the resort to military force as a basic element in Arab policy towards Israel is an error. In the second place, our best chance of containing Israel lies in international pressures either within or outside the United Nations. These international pressures, of whatever nature, have, however, a price. What is the price we are prepared to pay, is a question I leave to later on.

If the balance of military power has now been seriously upset in favour of Israel, there are other aspects of the balance of power which remain in our favour. Some of these have always existed, though we have not used them properly: others spring from the defeat of 5 June itself, for in all situations lie the seeds of their reversal. In the first place, Israel's military victory was a limited one—limited by those territorial, geopolitical factors which make the physical conquest of the Arab world impossible. Military occupation is one thing, permanent conquest and domination quite another. In the second place, Israel's military victory was not a political one: it has not led her any nearer to that peace on her terms which she would like, or any nearer to the negotiating table with the Arabs.

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It has on the contrary brought against her a coalition of international pressures which never existed before, and liquidated the fruit of twenty years' work to win friends in Africa and Asia.

If military force is not the Arabs' best card, neither is it Israel's. By a military action far out of proportion to the immediate situation it had to face, Israel has brought into play other factors which in the long run may modify the situation within Israel in ways which their present leaders had never envisaged.

Firstly, let us suppose that international pressures do not succeed in forcing Israel to withdraw to her pre-5 June frontiers. By incorporating the Gaza Strip and the West Bank into her territory, the proportion of Arabs to Jews in Israel will be radically changed. The higher birth-rate of the Arabs will give them equality in numbers, then a majority, in a few years. And as the proportion of "Arab" Jews to European Jews is also changing, the total population of Palestine will eventually, and before long, take on an oriental character. As we acquire some of their virtues, and they acquire some of our defects, the gap between Arab and Jew will narrow, and in fifty years could almost disappear.

Secondly, it is clear that the Zionist movement as a whole, and the Israeli leaders in particular, must now face a dramatic dilemma as a result of their *blitzkrieg* of 5 June. This dilemma is the following: If the Israeli Government accepts the Arabs within the territories she controls as full Israeli citizens, with equal civil and political rights, the concept of Israel which has hitherto been incorporated into her laws will have to be changed. Israel will no longer be a Jewish State, in which, as it does now, full citizenship requires not only membership of the Jewish religion, but Jewish ancestry. It will become a Jewish-Arab State in which nationality will be a function of residence or citizenship. Israel, in other words, as she has been since 1948, will no longer exist, and Palestine, with Arabs and Jews living together, will have been restored.

If, on the other hand, the Israeli authorities refuse to accept the Arabs as full citizens with equal civil and political rights, she will have on her hands a large population which she will be unable to liquidate or to govern.

It is the perception of this dilemma which is now leading some of the Israeli leaders to force the hands of the others and to try to have it both ways: to keep the territories they have conquered, and try to reduce the Arab population in numbers by encouraging their exodus across the Jordan. It is not difficult to foresee that the next step will be to encourage a new wave of Jewish immigration into Israel, to replace as many Arabs as possible in as short a period as possible.

If the extremists within Israel succeed in forcing the hand of the more reasonable, and getting the world Zionist movement to follow, then they will in fact make forever impossible their dream of an Arab-Jewish *rapprochement*. For the way in which the Arabs are ultimately going to judge the advantages of peace or war in their relations with Israel will depend on the way Israel treats the Arabs within its borders. If there is a genuine attempt to live together with the Arabs on terms of complete equality and within the same juro-political framework, the way to an eventual conciliation between Israel, or Palestine, and the rest of the Arab world will have been opened. But if the Arabs are excluded from full citizenship, and reduced to the status of a colonised, dependent population, no peace will ever be possible, either inside or outside Palestine.

It is not difficult to draw logical conclusions about what Arab policy should be in the light of this situation, and of this dilemma which faces Israel. If the goals of Arab policy should be, as I have suggested, (1) the containment of Israel within whatever boundaries we can get international pressure to agree to and to stabilise, (2) the gradual transformation of Israel from a European-dominated "exclusive" Jewish State into a predominantly oriental Arab-Jewish State, then the problem of whether or not to make a formal "peace" becomes a secondary one. It will no longer be a question of principle on which no Arab leader can compromise: it becomes a question of expediency and efficacy. But there is no reason why we should accept the Israeli argument that peace can only be obtained by direct negotiations with them. Since the United Nations, or some other international group, will have to be a party to any attempt to stabilise frontiers, all our efforts to obtain a settlement can be canalised through that organisation. What we cannot afford is to have no policy at all: to be unable to support the conditions of war, and incapable of profiting from the advantages of peace.

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The formulation of a consistent Arab policy towards Israel within the framework of the international community is thus perfectly possible and not difficult if we define both our aims and our methods. I have stated what these aims could be. As for the methods, a few are obvious, although others may also be found, and the way these methods are used will be up to the Arab negotiators to determine.

1. We should do all we can to secure the return to the frontiers as they were before 5 June 1967, not indeed as a final settlement but as a first step towards an arrangement in which the questions of frontiers, the rights of the refugees to return, and compensation will find a solution. The means we adopt to bring pressure on other powers to accept our point of view should be realistic, however: that is to say they should be capable of success, and they should not do us more harm than they can bring us benefits.

It is unlikely that we shall be able to achieve our objective without making some concessions. What these concessions might be, it is up to those governments who would have to make them to decide. But we should hope and insist that these governments would not act unilaterally, and thereby prejudice the outcome of any compromise they may accept.

2. In the event of our being unable to accept the terms on which a withdrawal from occupied territories is offered us, our second line of policy should be based on the principle that the forcible occupation of a territory involves a responsibility towards the inhabitants of that territory. We should not only bring the maximum international pressure to prevent Israel from expelling Arabs and expropriating their possessions in favour of new Jewish immigrants: we should bring the same international pressure on Israel to accord full political and civil rights to her Arab population, as well as the right of the Arab refugees to return. If all Palestine is re-united, there is no reason why any Palestinian should be prevented from returning to his country: not only the refugee masses now living in camps (old and new) should return: in addition all those Palestinians who have been able to find work and prosperity in the Arab countries should go back and help to rebuild the Palestine Arab community, and play their proper role in re-establishing the rights of the Arabs in their own country. The returning Arabs will not be a fifth column: one cannot be a fifth column in one's own country. The relations which the Palestinian Arabs within Palestine are then able or willing to establish with the Jews will be their own responsibility. The other Arab countries must help them by all means in their struggle to restore their rights and their human dignity: but the primary responsibility for their future will lie with the Palestinians themselves.

THERE REMAINS ONE more question perhaps more important than any I have yet discussed, because in the long run it will determine our relations with the Jews and their relations with us. *The fate and the peace of the Near East should not be left to the initiative of Israel alone.* Even if Israel opts for the closed, exclusive type of society, and rejects the Arabs as fellow-citizens, *we should not do the same.* If there is no room in Israeli society for the Arabs, we should show that there is room in Arab society for the Jews. This has always been the pattern of our society, and the greatest victory of militant Zionism would be to get us to abandon it and to adopt their concept of the State. For in their hearts they know that a closed, exclusive, fanatic Israel can never co-exist with an open liberal, and tolerant Arab society. There are Jews, however, in Israel and throughout the world who also reject the narrow vision and fanatical aims of some of their leaders, and who can be our allies in combating the introduction of racial nationalism into the Near East. Our greatest victory will be the day when the Jews in Palestine will prefer to live in an Arab society rather than in an Israeli one. It is up to us to make that possible.

Ourselves and the World

I HAVE SUGGESTED that we formulate and try to implement a consistent Arab policy towards Israel within the framework of the international community, which means in effect the United Nations. But it is not only in the problem of Israel that the international community can be of service to us. In many of our foreign relations our numbers and our potential strength make the U.N. a suitable instrument of action. This implies, however, a correct appraisal of our strength and our weakness in the world.

Our greatest mistake in the past has been to overestimate our actual and to underestimate our potential strength. From this combination of misjudgments spring almost all the errors of our international behaviour. We have formu-

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lated and pursued policies we could not implement: we have neglected to practise policies which might have succeeded.

Nothing illustrates this truth better than the international policies we have adopted towards Israel. All our attempts to find military solutions have ended in failure, and led to subsequent political and diplomatic failures. On the other hand, our diplomatic, political and economic efforts have often met with success until we lost our advantages by pushing them too far, or not realising what these advantages were.

For example, the St. James's Conference in London in 1939 between the British Government and some of the Arab Governments led to the White Paper, which was in our favour, but which we rejected. In 1948 we secured the evacuation of British civil and military authorities from Palestine, but we did not take the necessary steps to take their place. In 1948 again, after our first unsuccessful war, we could have turned our military defeat into a limited political victory and confined Israel to an insignificant territory. Instead, we preferred our theoretical rights and principles to our real advantages. By 1967—and this was the basic cause of Israel's aggression on 5 June—we had succeeded in building up an economic situation in Jordan and most of the other Arab countries to a point where foreign investors were beginning to have serious doubts about putting money in Israel if that meant exclusion from Arab markets. We had also isolated Israel diplomatically in wide areas of international life. We lost all these advantages by failing to analyse the situation correctly. We did not perceive that the disparity between Israel's growing economic and diplomatic difficulties and her military strength, would inevitably tempt her to restore the balance by a generalised rather than a localised military action. Instead of removing all possible pretexts for such an action we provided the pretexts they had difficulty in inventing themselves.

It is not only in relation to Israel that we have shown no understanding of our real strength and real weakness in international life. Our relations with the Great Powers, and with the international community as a whole show the same pattern of unrealism. Our Governments have behaved as if international goodwill and friendship are taps to be turned on and off as we please, and as if the definition of satisfactory relationships with other powers is a one-sided operation for us to undertake. We make agreements and break them because we have changed our minds. We make threats we do not intend or cannot carry out. We take actions when they can no longer be effective.

I SHALL LIMIT MYSELF to one example though I could give many. Arab oil, and the very considerable cash holdings which it generates for governments and private individuals, gives us the potential ability not only to solve most of our internal problems of poverty and underdevelopment: it could also play an important role in giving us influence in the economic and financial life of Europe, with a consequent political influence. In order to be effective, however, there are two necessary conditions to be fulfilled. We must define our long-term and short-term aims in terms of the possible; and we must co-ordinate the policies of the oil-producing countries, as well as the relations between them and the non-oil-producing countries.

The present crisis is an example of our failure to fulfil either of these two conditions. Before war broke out we took no effective steps to use our bargaining power on the diplomatic and political scene to prevent a war. When it did break out we took only half-hearted measures which could not succeed because they harm us more than they harm Israel, and do not constitute an effective means of pressure on any of the Great Powers. And not only has our action in this field been a failure: *it may also bring about a new situation in which our future ability to use our present potential strength will be seriously limited, if not abolished altogether.*

This danger can already be detected. Western Europe is now taking measures to reduce its dependence on Arab oil. Though it may not succeed in achieving complete independence for many years, it can certainly prevent a sudden paralysis of its industrial and civil life; and it can increase its ability to resist a long privation to a point where it will do more harm to the Arab economies than it does to its own.

The ineffectiveness and partial paralysis of Arab policy in this one field can be matched by similar failures in others. The prestige and the image of the Arabs in the world have suffered collectively and individually, and much of what we say or do is not taken seriously. The first step to remedying this situation must therefore be to take *ourselves* seriously: to introduce commonsense, consistency, and honesty into our

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relations with one another, and our relations with the outside world.

In the long run there are certain fundamental facts about international life which we must not ignore. Whatever natural advantages and potential assets we may possess in terms of numbers, territory, natural resources, our actual position and influence are a function of our ability to exploit them. We cannot expect to exert more influence than we have real power. Policies based on bluff or on self-deceit must sooner or later collapse. The facts of life count more than the illusions of power.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS of international relationships to which we must pay special attention: our relations with the United Nations Organisation, and with the Great Powers.

Ever since 1947 we have been unable to make up our minds about what our attitude to the U.N. should be. We resist its recommendations when they do not please us: we invoke them when it suits our purpose. We try to act on our own when we think we are winning: we come to the U.N. when we fear we are losing. One result of this is that in our minds the international organisation is associated with failures and set-backs, and rarely with successes.

Of course we are not alone in this vacillating attitude: Israel and other Governments act in exactly the same way. The question we must ask ourselves, however, is, how far do we *need* the organisation, or any form of international system or support.

In answering this question there are two facts to be noted and reflected on. All the Great Powers—except China—feel the need to belong to the U.N. even though they could exist quite well outside it. The second fact is that within the United Nations the Arab States could enjoy considerable influence and power, both because of their numbers and because of their membership of both the Asian and the African group of states.

From these two facts an important deduction can be made: if we need the protection and support which the international organisation can provide, we must be prepared to compromise, for every human community involves that. It is therefore important to understand what compromise really is. It is not, as some think, the sacrifice of the unessential in order to retain the essential: this is merely tactics. True compromise lies in giving up something which you may regard as your natural right in exchange for some greater advantage, not necessarily to you, but to the community to which you belong. If states renounce force as an instrument of national policy, this may favour the weak at the expense of the strong: but the strong may have a greater interest in world peace than in national aggrandisement. To accept compromise is thus not a disgraceful sign of weakness: there is no absolute strength or power. The only disgrace is to try to reject by force what we are later obliged to accept because of weakness.

If, then, we wish to remain within the international organisation because we need it, we should logically do everything we can to strengthen it and turn it into an effective instrument. We cannot expect to use it uniquely as an instrument of our national policies and our particular interests. We may sometimes have to accept decisions which we do not like. But the long-term benefits from strengthening the organisation may be greater than the short-term advantages of weakening it.

Our attitude to the U.N., therefore, both on a matter of general policy, and on particular issues, should be based not always on what appear to be our own immediate interests, but on the degree to which we may hope to benefit, in the short and the long term, from our membership of it, and on the need we find to use its collective strength on any particular issue. This does not preclude us, however, from working within the international organisation to secure for ourselves the maximum influence and strength which, when we need it, we shall then be able to exert.

THE REALISM we should cultivate in our relations with the international organisation we should also cultivate in our relations with the Great Powers. Here, again, we have been in the past neither realistic nor consistent. We try to play them off against each other but we get angry when they do not support us. We try to switch from one side to another in the hope of getting the best terms from them all, but we risk permanently alienating one side and thus becoming dependent on the other. We proclaim neutrality but do not practise it. We talk of our freedom of manoeuvre, but limit its effectiveness to a point where it may disappear. We would like some or all of the Great Powers to adopt our policies and see things from our own

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perspective, and forget that we are small and they are great. Our interests are often on one side, our sentiments on another, and thus we vacillate schizophrenically from one policy to another, and succeed in none. As a result, our relations with the individual Great Powers are ones either of unfriendliness or of dependence. And we are always at the mercy of their coming to terms with one another at our expense.

To establish our relations with the Great Powers on sound and positive bases which will give us the maximum advantage both from their quarrels and their agreements should be a major objective of our foreign policies. This implies an ability to grasp the realities of international life, and to adopt common policies consistently and honestly, which we have not hitherto possessed.

The Arab League

OUR MOST URGENT NEED is therefore to put our own house in order if we are to play an effective role in the world. There are two levels at which this must be done: the relationships between the Arab States must be put on sounder and more realistic bases, and each of them must make more serious efforts to solve their own particular problems.

The League of Arab States was established in 1944 with the principal aim of bringing into existence a joint foreign policy which would enable them to deal with the problem of Palestine as it existed at that time. By failing to prevent the establishment of Israel in 1948, the authority and effectiveness of the League suffered a serious setback. As in every crisis ever since, after a temporary solidarity in the face of war, the relations between the Arab States deteriorated as the responsibility for failure was thrown from one capital to another. By crystallising their disagreements and by providing a forum in which they could attack each other, the League gradually became not the instrument of a common foreign policy nor of a genuine *rapprochement* between its members, but quite the contrary.

With the decay and discredit of the Arab League further attempts to unify and co-ordinate foreign policy have been made in Summit meetings of Heads of States and occasional meetings of foreign ministers, but none of these have succeeded where the League failed; on the contrary, these failures have been even more spectacular than those of the League, in so far as they have crystallised and made public not merely divergencies of views, but also divergencies of personality and temperament between Arab leaders. The de-personalisation of Arab foreign policy is thus a pressing need.

The basic condition for a realistic Arab foreign policy is the recognition that not all Arab States have the same geographic and economic conditions, or the same interests. Before they can agree on what are their *common* interests, they must decide where they diverge. If there is no recognition of each one's legitimate interests, then at every crisis there is the risk that there will be no real co-ordination of effort, and that mutual recriminations will follow the inevitable failure of whatever joint policy they may attempt to apply. In fact, the Arab States have based their relations not on a realistic appraisal of the interests and the capacities of each one, but on an emotional solidarity which disappears once the immediate occasion is over.

IF, HOWEVER, THERE is to be a new attempt to establish a serious Arab foreign policy—and the problem of Palestine makes this now more urgent than ever—the Arab League could provide a better instrument than either Summit meetings or meetings of foreign ministers. There is now a real political justification for reviving the League as the framework within which collective decisions can be made and which could help to restore the relationships of the Arab States with the outside world. For while individual Arab leaders have always been anxious to obtain the credit for success, none of them are anxious to acquire the discredit of failure. The League would be a much more acceptable target of criticism, but it would have also to be endowed with the real ability to take decisions, for responsibility implies power, just as power imposes responsibility. The de-personalisation of inter-Arab relations, the re-establishment of a collective responsibility, and effective direction in the office and the personality of a dynamic Secretary General could do much to restore the image and revive the influence of the Arab States in the world.

But this image and this influence can never be better or greater than their real as opposed to their imaginary or their merely potential strength. To revive the Arab League merely as an instrument of publicity and propaganda would be a waste of energy and of money. The important—the urgent—need is now to create

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the conditions—*through concrete institutions, not resolutions or recommendations*—through which effective power and strength may be generated.

The greatest weakness of the Arab League ever since its establishment has been the failure of its members to agree among themselves except at the lowest common denominator. This has its roots in their inability or their unwillingness to recognise different priorities and different degrees of involvement in particular problems. They have either set their aims too high or too low. To do everything or to do nothing is not a practical choice in politics or any other sphere of life. What is important is to begin to take those steps which will in the end enable you to reach your final objective. The Arab League, faced with the difficulties of achieving its final goal—the political unification of the Arab world—never did anything seriously at all.

The first stage, therefore, in setting the Arab League into motion again is for it to call a meeting similar to the Alexandria Conference of 1944 to reconsider its methods, and to modify its constitution. High on the agenda of this meeting would be the question of *responsibilities*. Since not all Arab States are in a position to take effective action on all matters of common interest, a practical division of responsibilities should be made. The special circumstances of each country and of each region should be taken into account. Effectiveness rather than gestures of solidarity should be the only criterion.

From this point another and more important matter must be taken up: namely, the question of modifying existing political structures within the Arab world. When the United Arab Republic was formed, the Arab League was pushed into the background because it seemed to be unnecessary: if the United Arab Republic offered the focal point of a united Arab world, of what use was the League?

Circumstances have now changed, not only because of recent events, but also because for some time it has been evident that the U.A.R. itself has not been anxious to undertake the political and administrative obligations of an expanding union. There is no reason why the entire responsibility and onus of political modifications in the relations of other Arab States to each other should rest upon the U.A.R., nor is it probable that the Government of the U.A.R. would now place obstacles in the way of any new arrangement which, by strengthening the Arab capacity to resist Israeli expansion in the east, would thereby also strengthen Egypt's position in the south.

If the territories occupied by Israel in the recent war are not recovered it is obvious that some new Arab political structure east of the River Jordan will have to be created. If a vacuum of power is allowed to exist, the rest of Jordan will be overrun in a few years. To prevent this, steps will have to be taken to create a new political framework within which King Hussein may continue to fulfil the role which destiny has given him.

What that new political framework could be I do not intend to discuss now. What we must hope for is that the Arab régimes will be able to transcend their suspicions and jealousies of each other, to end their meaningless quarrels, and to take positive steps to halt the rapid degeneration which now threatens the very foundations of our national existence.

The Arab Régimes

The greatest source of weakness in the last twenty years has been the introduction into Arab political life of methods of government and of ideological slogans which are unsuitable and irrelevant to the actual conditions of the Arab countries. These methods and slogans have not only poisoned the relations between different Arab countries, they have also blinded some of their régimes to their real problems and their real interests.

The military régimes, for example, which have installed themselves in certain Arab countries since 1949 had their only justification in terms of the necessity of meeting external dangers. They have now given a public demonstration of their incompetence in war. What reason do we have to suppose that they are likely to be more successful in economic planning and development, in education, foreign affairs, finance, or culture?

Among the most harmful consequences of military régimes to the political, economic and social structure of the countries they have tried to govern is the exclusion from public life which they have deliberately or indirectly effected of vast numbers of educated and skilled citizens, who now languish idle either in their own countries, or in exile in others. This fact represents an enormous loss in terms of an invest-

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ment in human resources going back at least forty years. The resulting poverty of technicians is felt not only in civilian affairs, but even in the armies themselves, so that it can reasonably be argued that the military régimes instead of strengthening their armed forces have in reality weakened them.

The introduction of ideological slogans and political and economic doctrines which derive from contents radically different from those of the Arab countries has done even more harm to these countries both in their relations with each other and in their internal affairs. They have divided the Arab world into camps on issues which are not really relevant or along lines which do not make sense.

First of all, that between the so-called "progressive" or "revolutionary" and the "reactionary" or "conservative" régimes. It is interesting and significant that all those régimes which call themselves "progressive" are, in fact, military. What has led some of our leaders to adopt the language and imitate the style of movements and régimes with which they really have nothing in common? There are two basic reasons: the desire to find foreign allies and friends, and the need to seek popular support. Since most of the Arab countries have only recently emerged from Western domination or colonisation, it was natural for leaders seeking an easy popularity among the masses to align themselves with the enemies of the West in foreign policy, and to promise them economic and social welfare through "land reforms," "nationalisation," and other elements of the programme of certain socialist countries.

Except in Egypt, however, the "progressive" military régimes have not only failed to implement socialist programmes: they have actually lowered gross national products and seriously damaged the economic welfare of some sections of the population without improving that of others. Nor have they been able, or willing, to take those social and juridical measures which would have given a progressive character to their régimes, at least on paper. Not one of the "progressive" régimes, for example, has abolished polygamy. On the contrary, some of them have been trying to reintroduce a conservative interpretation of Islam into public life. And certain of the régimes which have been classified as "conservative" or "reactionary" have done much for their populations in terms of economic progress and social legislation.

Secondly, the attempt to identify Arab nationalism with the "progressive" as opposed to the "reactionary" régimes has led to a senseless and dangerous conflict between some of the Arab Governments, just as it has inflamed and divided public opinion all over the Arab world. We must reject and resist the claim that any one régime or party or leader has a monopoly on Arab nationalism, and refuse to accept that differences of opinion or of interests provide an adequate basis for classifying régimes or individuals as genuine nationalists or traitors. The poisonous campaigns waged by the radio stations and the press in certain countries should be condemned, ignored, or ridiculed, and every pressure should be brought on those governments which utilise or permit them to put an end to this scandal of the Arab world.

The Real Problem

The introduction into Arab life of political and social doctrines which are not relevant to it at its present stage not only weakens the Arab countries by dividing them on irrelevant issues; it also diverts their attention from their real problems. The only valid distinction at this time between the Arab countries lies in the degree of their economic and social development, and in the resources they possess to promote their progress. The real difference is between the less- and the more-underdeveloped, and between the rich and the poor. There is no reason why we should anticipate the problems of more highly developed societies before we have reached the stage where these problems become real and demand solutions. There is no reason why we should adopt the language and the political forms of social and economic conflicts which are not relevant to our societies.

The most immediate and urgent problems which face nearly all the Arab countries are those involved in establishing the minimum conditions on which a modern society may eventually be built. While the nature of that society, and the social and economic content of the measures to be taken to bring it into existence must certainly be studied and discussed, and will certainly provide eventually the grounds for divergent opinions and political movements, we have not yet reached that stage. There is a wide area for action where interests are common and basic enough for us to ignore

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or at least to postpone questions which may divide us at a moment when we need to be united.

For some of the under-developed countries of the world the necessity of finding an outside source for the capital investments and the technical skills they lack forces them to an involvement in the ideological conflict and divisions of the more-developed world. No such necessity exists for the Arab world, which has all the material, and many of the human resources, which it needs. There is sufficient capital and liquidity to make us independent of outside financial help, and to promote our own economic and social progress provided we use our resources intelligently, and take a broad view of both the existing and the future needs of the Arab world as a whole. We have vast territories, enormous natural resources, and vital strategic positions. What we need is to exploit them in terms of today's and tomorrow's needs. Countries which are rich today may not be always: others which are poor today possess potentialities which may one day make them rich. The total human and natural resources of the Arab world must be studied and then exploited in the light of a general plan, a moving idea.

IT IS THIS GREAT RESPONSIBILITY *which now faces the educated classes in the Arab countries. They have a unique chance which is not given to many of the educated classes of more developed countries and societies, weighed down as they often are by traditions and already established patterns of life which do not give much scope to originality or to individual initiative. It is our good fortune to be born at a time when not only great tasks await us, but when the possibility of action is also present.*

Instead of the sterile and irrelevant discussions, the bitter divisions and mutual suspicions which dominate our political and intellectual life, we should try to establish among ourselves an understanding, an agreement on principles, a mutual confidence which will make possible the action which must now be undertaken if the Arab world is to be saved from a rapid decline.

Blind Man's Bluff

The streaming air booms
Collaterally and daily round:
I am enamoured of this sound,
For since I cannot see
I have upturned senses.

Clumsiness rolls back like stones
Fresh vibrant acres are revealed.
Silences are fingerprints
Relinquished by noise.
Voices are sudden as phones.

I feel small disadvantage. The sun
Is strangely congruent with light;
That puzzles. It lacks tone.
It's only when I touch your face
I could scream for my sight.

Seamus Deane

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Nathan Glazer

The Ghetto Crisis

TWO THINGS have become clear since Detroit. The first is that the American Negro has entered a phase of the most extreme radicalism. The second is that the American Congress and the American President are not prepared or willing to do much about it. There will be "no reward for rioting," as it has been put. Now the question will become: just what is happening to the Ghetto Negroes, and what are they ready to do in a situation in which no great new programmes will be launched?

On the radical mood of the Negro, there can hardly be any argument. For the first three years of the summer rioting, Negro leaders and whites alike ascribed the destruction to a small, violent, criminal element. After Newark and Detroit, this is no longer possible. Very substantial parts of the ghetto population have joined in the burning and the looting. Just after Detroit, results of a study of the Watts riot were published—and these, too, showed that a quarter of the adult population was actively involved and considerably more approved. And many who did not approve felt some sort of community pride in the scale of destruction and national attention achieved.

But I would not depend on public opinion polls alone for a measure of the radicalisation of the Negro population. One need only look at the political configuration in the Negro communities throughout the country. In every community there are small radical groups, hardly known or noticed three or four years ago, who now claim to speak for the community—and whether they actually do or not, the moderate forces are silenced. Whatever the size of the radical element, they have undoubtedly seized the political initiative. Of course one element in their rapid increase in strength is their access to the television cameras, and this one might say scarcely reflects their power in the Negro community. For the Negro community does not decide whom to put on the television screens to represent them. It is rather white newsmen following their news sense who do this, and they tend to put on the most extreme leaders who make much better copy than the moderates. One might conclude ironically that just as liberal white newsmen soberly reporting the words of Joe McCarthy helped create McCarthyism, *so too*, liberal white newsmen have helped create the dominance of Negro militancy and radicalism in the community. But I shy away from ascribing this kind of independent role to the news media, whether in the creation of McCarthyism or in the success of the black militants. In both cases more substantial social forces have been interwoven with the vagaries of politics and the nature of the mass media to lead to the domination of the extremists.

WHAT CONCRETELY DOES this domination of extremism consist of? It means that in every community, established elements in the Negro community—political leaders, trade union leaders, religious leaders, high Civil Servants, wealthy businessmen—speak less and are consulted less; while leaders who may be, for the first time, themselves actually unemployed ghetto youth perhaps with criminal records, now claim to speak for the ghetto communities.

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And the mayors and the councils listen. What they do about it is another matter. But in many communities these new leaders have invaded council chambers, disrupted parliamentary procedure, raised demands—and they have in many cases been listened to with respect, a respect they have gained through the threat that they can burn the city down and the claim that they, and only they, can prevent the city from going up in flames.

Under this kind of pressure, the Mayor of Mt. Vernon, New York, agreed to subsidise a number of jobs so that they paid $2.50 an hour or $100 a week; other city officials then said the agreement was illegal. In a Michigan city, a mayor released a youth held for rioting, under the threat of further destruction. In another Michigan city, a city council changed its vote on a fair housing ordinance under pressures from the Negro citizens that certainly verged on the undemocratic. The line is difficult to draw between an aroused citizenry flooding council chambers to voice their grievances—which is a regular part of the American scene—and the threat that unless these grievances are immediately acted upon the city will be in ashes—which means the breakdown of regular democratic procedures.

THE TACTICS, thus, now verge on the revolutionary. The objectives, however, can as yet hardly be called revolutionary—they remain good jobs, good housing, police fairness. The local president of the NAACP chapter in Mt. Vernon was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying, "Unless you do something revolutionary, you're not going to get anywhere." The *Times* reporter continued: "His example of a revolutionary programme... was a paid apprenticeship programme for youths learning unionised trade skills." That doesn't sound very revolutionary. But perhaps we will have to change our conception of what is revolutionary. It has been fantastically difficult to break down the barriers which keep Negroes out of the high-paying trade unions and the apprenticeship programmes they control.

But just as we once saw revolutionary demands accompanied with mild tactics, now we see revolutionary tactics associated with what are, in one perspective, mild demands that need not destroy the society. But the tactics certainly will.

Many of the new Negro militants have been organised initially by the organisers of the local Community Action Programmes, supported by funds from the national poverty programme. Some have been organised by white radicals from the Students for Democratic Society and other white groups. A few years ago (even a year ago) one could cynically regard these new black ghetto leaders as the pawns of the white organisers, infused from the outside with radical rhetoric and hopes. Today, one would be ill-advised to assume that a white hand moves the black ghetto leader. Indeed, the relationship of the white radical to the black militant has now degenerated into the rather shameful self-abasement of the white radical in the hope that he will still be allowed some role in what is indubitably the most radical movement in the country. A year ago the white radicals were introducing their black pupils to Frantz Fanon, the French Negro analyst of the necessary and purifying role of violence in the colonial revolution. Today no white accessory is required to spread Fanon's work and thought in the ghettos among the youth.

Consider Volume 1, No. 5, of *The Black Panther*, a 24-page newspaper, published in Oakland, California, 20 July, by the Black Panther Party for Self-Defence. The leading headline on the first page is POLICE SLAUGHTER BLACK PEOPLE. Across the bottom in heavy black type is the slogan "Guns Baby Guns." In the lower right-hand quarter there is a cartoon, titled *"Support Your Local Police."* It shows a bleeding pig, marked with a star (five-pointed, one is relieved to say), held up by the tail by a black hand. Its *"Bootlickers Gallery"* includes pictures of Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young, Congressman Dawson and Senator Brooke, Bayard Rustin and Martin Luther King, and even James Baldwin and Floyd McKissick.

I have no idea what the membership of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defence is, but last May about twenty of them startled the California legislature and gained national headlines. They had come to Sacramento to lobby against a bill restricting the right to carry loaded guns, and they appeared in the chamber of the legislature itself, carrying loaded guns. According to one report, they were intending only to exercise their right of peaceful protest by carrying their weapons into the visitors' gallery, but they blundered into the legislative chamber because they did not know the layout of the building. One reads such a publication as *The Black Panther* in the hope that it is only a front for

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one of the pro-Chinese radical groups in the Bay Area. After all, we do know about white American radicals and the limits of *their* power! Unfortunately, there is no evidence, despite the *Black Panther*'s friendliness to China, that the *Black Panther* is anything other than what it presents itself to be.

The Black Panther Party has very few members, but it publishes a newspaper, it gets national publicity in the *New York Times*, its members include a former interviewer and a prospective interviewer for University of California research projects in the ghetto—which suggests that the membership is not simply the very bottom of the ghetto. And very few Negro moderates will attack or criticise it.

Such groups exist in every Negro ghetto. In New York a few Negro radicals are on trial for having allegedly planned the assassination of Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young, the leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (Naacp) and the National Urban League. In San Francisco, one Negro elected official, meeting with black youth leaders for a radio programme, was told that one of the most important jobs for black militants was to "liquidate false leaders"—like himself. In San Francisco, the Negro publisher of the leading Negro community newspaper told the national convention of Negro real estate brokers that middle-class people like himself (and the brokers he was speaking to) were hated in the ghetto. Up to a year or two ago the speaker was considered one of the most militant leaders in the Negro community. In Detroit, one of the two Negro Congressmen was driven off the street when he tried to appeal to rioters. Whitney Young (recently on the cover of *Time* magazine) appeals for "some victories if moderates are to retain any power in the community." Martin Luther King has not formally given up non-violence—it is inconceivable that he would. Yet he has proposed for consideration massive civil disobedience which would bring the lives of the great cities to a standstill. In 1964, when a local New York City chapter of Core proposed blocking the expressways to the New York World's Fair with bodies, the national leader of Core reprimanded them; now, the national leader of Core, which began as a largely white, non-violent and pacifist organisation, insists that violence is natural and necessary, violence will come, and Negroes must be ready for it. And Martin Luther King is ready to adopt the tactics of the rejected extremists of 1964.

So the political initiative in the ghettos is, for the moment, in the hands of the militants and the extremists. How deep is the new mood? When Negroes riot, do they riot because black extremists attack white policemen, storekeepers, landlords, and politicians nightly on the street corners of the ghetto, and sometimes call upon them directly to burn and destroy? Or do they riot because they want a holiday, they are hot and sticky and hemmed in, they want to get those new television sets and haul away the liquor? (Among the first stores to be attacked are the liquor stores—and one might say as long as it is not the weapons supplies, the situation is still not truly desperate.)

If one wants to read a very authentic account of a present-day Negro ghetto riot, it can be found in Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*—except that the riot *he* describes took place in New York City in 1935, not thirty years later. Indeed, the same riot took place in New York again in 1943. All the ingredients were the same—in both cases an incident involving a police arrest, the gathering of a crowd, and then the smashing of the stores. In both cases black nationalist street-corner speech-making was an aspect of the situation. But the riots followed police incidents (as was true in Newark and Detroit), not inflammatory speeches. Indeed, only one case has yet been recorded where the initiating incident may have been a speech—Cambridge, Maryland, where the Negro section of town was burned down when Rap Brown called upon his audience to burn it down. But even there the connection is not clear. Rap Brown has called upon many other Negro audiences to burn the town down, without immediate effect.

The riots of 1935, 1943, and 1964–7 are very similar in their initiating incidents, their character, their scale, and their underlying causes. In 1943, Mayor LaGuardia asserted,

> this was not a race riot. There was no conflict between groups of our citizens.... There was no need for all of this. It was just hoodlums, people with criminal intent, doing violence and stealing, and stealing from their own group, and injuring their own people.

He sounds just like a 1966 mayor. Mayor LaGuardia was of course wrong—he was thinking of a race riot as one in which whites killed

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Negroes, as had so frequently happened in American history. In the new style of riot that began in 1935, Negroes loot and destroy white property. It is still however a "race riot." At that time the (Negro) *New York Age* denounced "the worthless five per cent" of Harlem (the same percentage that was accused in 1964-6). This was the epoch before television; but there were liquor stores. "Of 40 liquor stores in the district, 30 were cleaned out completely with not a bottle left in the place." (I am quoting from an account of the riot by Harold Orlansky, published in 1943.) Food markets and clothing stores were the other major sufferers, then as now. There were more pawnshops and less appliance stores than there are now; and the pawnshops suffered severely. Even the ghetto is now more affluent. "When the riot began, Negro storeowners placed signs reading *'Coloured,'* in their windows.... These stores were left intact." The signs now read *"Blood"* or *"Soul"* but the effect is the same.[1] "Boys in their teens and young men were the leaders of the riot."

In the riot of 1935, Mayor LaGuardia was fortunate in having E. Franklin Frazier, the most famous American Negro sociologist, chair his commission of inquiry. He wrote:

> The explosion ... could never have been set off by the trifling incident had not exciting economic and social forces created a state of emotional tension which sought release upon the slightest provocation. As long as the economic and social forces which were responsible for that condition continue to operate, a state of tension will exist in Harlem and recurrent outbreaks may occur.

When could one not have written that of the Negro in the Northern city?

WHAT, THEN, HAS changed? What has changed is the scale of the rioting, which is now endemic all over the North and West. What has changed, too, and what makes the matter so serious is that thirty years of what in one perspective is a good deal of progress has made no change in the conditions of the ghetto. There are more Negroes in elected office; the shame of Negro disenfranchisement in the South is wiped out; there are vastly greater numbers of Negroes in secure jobs in the civil service, the mass production industries, in white collar and professional jobs; there is better housing for Negroes throughout the North and West. Public discrimination against Negroes in Northern and Western cities is all but non-existent, and indeed in some areas—such as admission to good colleges—we now have a good deal of leaning over backwards to favour Negroes. But all this has made little difference. Indeed, quite the contrary. What appears to the whites as "considerable progress" has taken place alongside a steady increase in measures of social disorganisation. The numbers of broken families, of illegitimate children, of juvenile delinquents, of families on welfare steadily increase, and (as Daniel Moynihan argues) with no relationship to the objective economic circumstances as given by the state of the economy and the rate of unemployment. Shocking things emerge that we should have known of—apparently 10 per cent of the Negro population was missed in the last census, most of them men in the age-range from twenty to forty who were living under circumstances which made it difficult for the census-takers (and their wives, girl-friends, children, finance companies, the police, welfare workers, and other interested parties) to find them.

From the Negro point of view, there has been no improvement at all—which makes the problem of dialogue on just what is happening as difficult as that between ex-mother countries and colonial countries. What is fact to one is illusion to the other. Thus considerable improvement, on some objective measures, is accompanied by increasing resentment and bitterness among the Negro population that the progress has not been greater, that the gap between white and black still exists. In Depression New York, the great majority of Negroes were without regular work and many were on relief; today that proportion has dropped to perhaps 30 or 40 per cent —progress, indeed, one may say, from the 80 to 90 per cent some thirty years ago. But apparently by no means progress enough. Meanwhile, the huge migration from Southern farms and small towns continues. A third of a million Negroes in New York City in 1930 became 1,100,000 in 1960. The rise in the number of Negroes in other Northern and Western cities was comparable. Whatever the improvement for some, great new numbers have been ready to take their places in the ghettos—and still are. But in

[1] Is this a sign that racial brotherhood overcomes the simple desire for loot? Before we accept such a conclusion we should recall that the Negro-owned stores are generally beauty salons and barber shops, small luncheonettes and restaurants, clothes cleaning establishments.

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any case, we now know that we cannot ascribe the social disorganisation in the Negro communities only to heavy migration from the South. In some ways, according to some studies, the long-settled Negro population is worse off than the newer migrants (in mental health, for example).

ONE OTHER THING has changed since the 1930s. The Negro no longer accepts the distribution of power and income under which he receives a lesser income, a less secure job, poorer housing, and more police brutality, a term which now covers everything from physical violence and excessive police surveillance to disrespectful terms of address. It is this which encourages the unmeasured and violent language in which public housing projects are called "prisons," poverty is labelled "slavery," disrespectful language becomes "brutality," the demand for better living conditions becomes the call for "liberation" or "freedom." And men are willing to do things for "liberation" and "freedom" that they probably would not do for higher welfare payments. But the encouraging thing is that whites no longer accept the existing distribution of goods as natural or right.

ONE MIGHT have expected that, as a result of Newark and Detroit, there would be a wave of fear and suppression across the country. This has not happened. It is true Southern Senators have been conducting hearings in which the chief witnesses have been police chiefs arguing that the population has been inflamed by extremists and that they need a freer hand to deal with a simple matter of law and order. But the dominant reaction has not been simply a demand for suppression of illegal acts. Many of the actions proposed or undertaken to increase security have been liberal and reasonable. Thus, the President's Commission on the riots, shortly after it was formed, pointed to the poor performance of the National Guard when called upon to restore order. The Guard, a militia of civilians who have limited military training, had been criticised for using excessively heavy weapons, firing too often and too indiscriminately. The Commission urged that one way of improving its performance, in addition to special training, was to increase the very small proportion of Negro members in the National Guard. James Q. Wilson of Harvard[2] and Mayor Jerome Cavanagh of Detroit have proposed national riot-police forces—and in the United States, to propose a national or federal police to take over some functions of state police forces is to move in a liberal direction.

Most striking is a Louis Harris poll, taken shortly after the riots. White Americans are for massive aid for the Ghetto. "The white's concern about the black man has been quickened," the *Newsweek* summary reads, "but it seems vitally lacking in affection. Fear and resentment have apparently displaced their weight in sympathy, and the white man's endorsement of massive aid to the ghettos may seem to him an imperative more pragmatic than moral." 66 per cent of whites favour "setting up large-scale government work projects to give jobs to the unemployed"; 63 per cent favour "Federal programmes to tear down ghettos in cities"; 55 per cent favour "setting up massive summer camps"; 59 per cent favour "Federal programmes to exterminate rats."

Republican Senator Thruston Morton called for an "immediate billion-dollar programme"; Democratic Senator Ribicoff and Republican Senator Percy have also called for an immediate "emergency billion"; seven Republican Governors, called together by Governor Rockefeller of New York, called for more money from Washington. Vice-President Humphrey has called for a "Marshall Plan." Democratic members of a Senate Committee have now placed before the Senate a bill to spend $2,800,000 on a new work programme. But despite all the backing in the polls, and all this respectable political support, nothing new is likely to be undertaken this year. Indeed, the President, who should be the one to ask for it, has asked for nothing beyond the programmes he sent up to the Congress before the summer—and does not expect even to get that much. As against the emergency billions, and the variety of programmes that might be proposed on the spur of the moment, there are a number of proposals of longer vintage that seem to be ideal. Thus, the President's Commission on Technology, Automation and Economic Progress proposed more than a year ago that the Federal government become the "employer of last resort"—if a man can't get a job, the government will hire him.

[2] See his "Letter from America: Black and White Tragedy" in the September ENCOUNTER.

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Daniel Moynihan has been arguing in testimony before congressional committees and in various articles that the government should institute a "family allowance," and he has argued forcefully and researched the matter well. It would put some more money into the hands of the poorest fast, by being universal it would get away from the political disability involved in "rewarding rioters," it would be easy to administer, and would be no more than such unrevolutionary nations as Canada and England already do. These proposals (as well as the more radical proposals for a "negative income tax") will apparently get nowhere. The country will have to ride out the riots and the danger of the breakdown of security and civilised life in the cities without great new social programmes.

On the face of it, it would seem there was enough political support for big new programmes. The Urban Coalition, whose leaders include Walter Reuther, Henry Ford II, David Rockefeller, Mayor Lindsay of New York, and a host of other labour leaders, businessmen, mayors, religious figures, moderate Negro spokesmen, Democrats and Republicans, would seem to be a sufficiently broad establishment group to get some large new programme through. There is the positive if grudging response in the polls. But the polls do not ask how much in increased taxes people will be prepared to pay. And the President has not asked for new programmes because presumably he doesn't think he can get them.

There are some obvious problems in the way of substantial reform efforts. First, the fantastically heavy expenditures for the Viet Nam war, and the higher taxes that will have to be imposed because of the war alone. Whatever the President says, he cannot also ask for additional taxes for some large new major domestic programmes—which would have to be something of the order of magnitude of five or ten billion dollars annually to make any kind of impact on a problem which has remained impervious to smaller expenditures.

The second problem is that Congress, despite what seems to be an overwhelming sense of urgency in the cities, does not reflect this urgency. Its tone is still set by small-town, rural, and Southern representatives, to whom have been added an increasingly large suburban delegation. It is still more responsive to the need to "hold taxes down" than to the need to do something about the gravest domestic crisis in a hundred years of American history.

From the cities themselves, the representation in Congress—and even more so in city government—tends to be from the second- and third-generation ethnic groups, who are by now totally unsympathetic to the Negro plight and, more than that, fearful of them. One of the tragedies of the American race situation is that the Negro sees the white in the image of the white Southerner—even when he comes to the North. The white is the brutal and sadistic oppressor. To the children of the immigrants in the North, however, Negro rhetoric and the Negro analysis make no sense. The second-generation ethnic doesn't think *he* is holding the Negro down—he is doing his job in the factory, or on the police force, or running his shop, and he sees none of these functions as particularly oppressive. When the Negro calls the ghetto "a jail," the Northern second-generation ethnic white recalls that he moved through the same ghetto—and it was not a jail for him then. He doesn't see what has changed, why the Negro is different—or *that* different. Consequently the question always arises, "What *does* the Negro want?" This enrages the Negro and his spokesmen—but what is simple liberation, or equality, for him is to the man who passed through the ghetto a generation before—and that is about the time-range—a matter of special privilege. What is impressive to me is that the rather powerful argument that the second-generation ethnics and their representatives in Congress and in city government could make has been snowed under by the liberal interpretation of all establishment forces—Yes, the Negro *does* need more. But whatever the success of the liberal interpretation in the press, the magazines, on television, in the Presidency and in the federal establishment, there is a good deal of resistance (even if underground resistance) to doing more for the Negroes. It is based on the experience of those who have been part of the inner city, as well as those who have not.

The third problem—and this undermines the will of a large component of any potential urban coalition—is our confusion over what should be done and what its effects might be. We know too much to be enthusiastic in advance over the effect of any programme we might institute, and not enough to foresee what its effects will be. One can run through the litany of proposals, and point to the grave problems that might pre-

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vent any of them from having the hoped-for effects.

A massive job programme? Jobs for $1.25 or more an hour already go begging in the private sector and in many poverty programmes. If we offer more, do we not upset the whole carefully arranged wage-system? Can we give rebellious adolescents more than their hard-working fathers? The great Works Progress Administration programme of the New Deal could give subsistence wages. But in our major Northern and Western states the unemployed or those without income already get subsistence without working—what then should be the nature of a great new work relief programme?

The fact is that we do not understand enough about the Negro unemployment problem, though many studies are under way which may enlighten us. We are told that "almost no one on the welfare rolls is capable of working"; and, on the other hand, we are told that vast numbers of young people in the ghetto are unemployed and many of them must be in families on welfare. The Negro youth unemployment figures are huge (a fourth or more), but there is a much smaller unemployment figure for those in their twenties and beyond (an eighth or less). I am reminded of the phenomenon that David Matza pointed to a few years ago—vast numbers of young people in the ghetto get records as juvenile delinquents, but few become adult criminals. What happens? Is it that the youth will not work at jobs they consider degrading or insufficiently rewarding, but that older ones settle for them, or are forced to settle for them? Or is it that, as the census discrepancy suggests, the Negro men evade the unemployment sample surveys, while the youth are still living at home? The fact is we do not know what it means to make the government the employer of last resort—what jobs should be provided, at what levels of wages, how many would then be needed, and what would our provision do to jobs in the private economy? This is not to say we shouldn't try it and find out. But certainly our ignorance undermines our will.

New houses for all? The public housing programme, which is the only public programme which does provide substantial quantities of new low-income housing, is already under severe attack—the militants call them "high-rise slums," and "prisons," and are only beginning to recognise some of their virtues now, as redoubts for urban guerrilla warfare. The rent-supplement programme is untried on any massive scale, as are the various programmes to extend home-ownership to the poorest.

The problem of providing sufficient housing for the poor is enormously complicated by the fact that it will be largely housing for Negroes. We don't want, through public action, to extend the ghetto; while to distribute Negroes among whites through public action still creates great problems. Our cities find it difficult to site public housing projects in white or middle-income areas, and they find it difficult to distribute poor and Negro families through white or middle-class districts. The class and the race factors reinforce each other. This makes the problem of integration enormously difficult, and inhibits the development of massive housing programmes. What also inhibits them, of course, is their cost, and the fact that it would be difficult to get the huge sums for subsidies that would be required to provide a dramatic increase in housing quality in the ghettos.

Negative income tax or guaranteed annual income? We cannot estimate the effect on those employed near the marginal levels of income that the negative income tax would make available. And is not the issue *jobs* rather than income?

Family allowances? Good enough, but it does nothing to salvage the role of the male in Negro society—presumably the money will still go to mothers, and will not be enough to keep men home. Negro birthrates are much higher than white birthrates, and even if family allowances have no effect on birthrates they certainly will not have negative effects.

AND SO it goes. Subsistence is not enough. Jobs are not enough. "Income with dignity," that is the cry. And yet, the definition of dignity is a perilous matter. Janitors and servants are dignified in some societies. Elevator operators and porters are dignified in some social settings. The tragedy of the American Negro is that everything he touches or can touch becomes to some measure defiled with the notion that, as long as it is something *he* achieves in a white man's society, it is in some measure undignified. Thus even Cabinet Secretaries or Supreme Court Justices—simply because of the eminence of their position in the white man's society—can be attacked as "Uncle Toms," playing undignified roles. And thus the enormous attraction of the slogan, "Black Power." Like early Zionists, the Black Power advocates may

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come to the position that unskilled labour in the service of their own (black) institutions is more dignified than the highest post in the white man's society. But as yet the *Black Power* slogan remains a confused cry, rather than an index to any programme. It means violence to the youth, looting to the drifters, revolution to the theorists, and presumably to most of those who respond to it, it means equality—in income, in jobs, in respect. Fair enough, one says. And yet income, jobs, and respect are distributed according to principles, in themselves of some virtue, that would limit the Negro share of these for some time to come, even if race prejudice were to vanish overnight. Education, capacity, motivation, demeanour, are not at all distributed through the population in random proportions. With the best will in the world, it becomes enormously difficult to equalise the goods of society in a situation in which the bases on which those goods get distributed are themselves maldistributed.

I raise these questions because, in a situation in which the political omens are discouraging, any form of doubt over what programmes can achieve, and how fast, will weaken an effort to get new programmes adopted and started. One might say we have done too little, too early. The varied programmes of the past six or seven years have discouraged many men of good will, have raised Negro expectations and hopes enormously, and have left us a heritage of new problems rather than new solutions. How one wishes for the open field of the New Deal! It was, at least, unlittered with the carcasses of half-successful programmes, each in the hands of a hardening bureaucracy. Our deficiencies of knowledge combine with these heritages of the programmes we have started with such great abandon in the last few years to make the task of launching "big new programmes" considerably more difficult.

NONE OF THE PROBLEMS I have described is insuperable. The United States is a country used to change, with enormous resources. It can try many things, and its most urgent task is to try something very big, very fast. I myself think that this country, which has absorbed the immigrants and the working classes, will also be able to absorb the Negroes. But that, alas, is only an act of faith, and not a scenario as to how it is to be done.

Hydromaniac

I was leaning across your chest;
Like a marble-smith, I made pencilmarks over
Its vanilla skin, its young man's skin,
Refreshing as the pleasure page in a daily newspaper.
I sniffed you to quench my thirst,
As one sniffs in the sky huge, damp sheets of lightning
That bring down the chablis, hocks, moselles,
And tear cold, watery holes.
Those soaking wet chords from Brahms (. . . their overflow,
On which you could float a canoe)
Are not more refreshing! Nor is the fragrant gin-fizz
From the glass joint of a rod of grass.

My life cries out for water!
Haughty sheets of newsprint, lightning, music, skin!
Haughty bathrooms where the lukewarm swimmer
In his water-colour coat of soap is king.

Rosemary Tonks

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Melvin J. Lasky

The Idea of an Intellectual Public

A Talk in Ann Arbor

ON RETURNING to this place for the first time in some twenty-five years, I cannot help thinking of that class of 1939–40 to which I belonged. Our year began with the historic opening September shots of the invasion of Poland and closed with the fall of Paris and the German occupation of France. Surely any thoughts one may have on the subject of the relationship between university and culture must be prefaced by the hope—even if it is, under the circumstances, more pious than practical—for peace. Ours has been a time which has had more than its share of murder and ruin. Yet this was not a generation which appeared, at least in its most conspicuous or most vocal representatives, to be unprepared for the burdens of history. However rhetorical and romantic—and now, looking back, I would (as I wouldn't have then) concede both points—the minds of the young were agitated by vast ideas of political drama, of war and revolution, of violent change on a universal scale. Naïve and impassioned, full of the fury and follies of the '30s,[1] we were young intellectuals, heirs (as we fancied) to a great and colourful Western tradition which included Marx in London and Erasmus in Basle, Heine in Paris and Tocqueville en route in the U.S.A. We were perhaps, the last American generation to follow the classic European pattern: and by this I do not mean simply "being educated beyond our intellects," but rather, extracting from the academy those weapons of ideas and language with which effectively to participate in the processes of vital social change. The academy was only the armoury; society was the field of battle. The study of man, history, and culture would go on with us to the last days; but the university was only a temporary and transitional place. We had no more thought of remaining there than a soldier remains in a training camp when there are fronts to be manned. And what was an intellectual, as we had been instructed by the poet, if not a soldier in the liberation of mankind?

This was, then, an American generation with a sense of mission. It was, almost to a man, liberal or radical or revolutionary, and it felt a sense of kinship, somewhat sentimental and certainly adolescent, with the great archetypes of the past: Milton and the struggle for the Good Old Cause; Voltaire and Diderot and the campaign on behalf of enlightened human reason; Herzen and the changing of the tides on other shores; and, one must add, Jefferson and Whitman, American voices, important even if domestic, which seemed to us full of the same universal longing. We longed to be part of that noble and heroic clan, the *intelligentsia*, which for centuries had conceived the great apocalyptic dreams of utopia and revolution. Our hearts were in the future and our feet in the past. We thought of ourselves as immersed in what T. S. Eliot had convinced us was the most genuine

THIS *is the text of an opening address at a recent conference on "The University and the Body Politic" at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where the author was given one of the University's Sesquicentennial Awards.*

[1] See Alfred Kazin, *Starting Out in the Thirties* (1965) and Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left* (1961).

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"THE FIRST OBLIGATION *of the intellectuals is to look after intellectual things, to concentrate their powers on the creation and reproduction and consumption of particular works of philosophy, art, science, literature, or scholarship, to receive the traditions in which these works stand with a discriminating readiness to accept, elaborate, or reject....*

"By means of preaching, teaching, and writing, intellectuals infuse into sections of the population which are intellectual neither by inner vocation nor by social role, a perceptiveness and an imagery which they would otherwise lack."

EDWARD SHILS
The Intellectuals and the Powers (1958)

"THE UNIVERSITY *now occupies a central position in the society. Formerly its chief function was that of conserving and transmitting the intellectual traditions and cultural values of society. Now the university serves more as the centre for research and innovation.*

"The university is today increasingly committed to a technocratic orientation: in its devotion to professionalism, in its emphasis on specialisation, in its expanded role as a public service institution training students for society. The university, too, is devoted to Humanitas, *but the sense of tradition and of the past that could be one anchorage against such tides is being eroded by formal pieties or is in danger of being swept away by the swift-running currents of the post-modern moods. The confrontation between these two modes, I would predict, will be the most urgent cultural problem of the university in the future...."*

DANIEL BELL
The Reforming of General Education (1966)

"CULTURE *is activity of thought, and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling. Scraps of information have nothing to do with it. A merely well-informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth. What we should aim at producing is men who possess both culture and expert knowledge in some special direction. Their expert knowledge will give them the ground to start from, and their culture will lead them as deep as philosophy and as high as art."*

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD
The Aims of Education (1929)

tradition: that historical sense which catches "not only the pastness of the past, but its presence," which compels a man to act "not merely with his own generation in his bones" but with a feeling that the whole of culture and human aspiration has "a simultaneous existence."

Let me persist, for just a moment longer, in this excursion into the personal past—not out of nostalgia or narcissism but to search for a relevant point of departure. For what I want to consider, if only in the briefest and most hasty and tentative exploration, is the relationship between University, Culture, and the Intellectual Class which would appear to be the historic link or bridge. It seems pertinent, therefore, to try to follow what happened to this, my own, American generation, and to ask: Where have all the intellectuals gone?

WHEN I THINK BACK to my own last civilian days in New York, before being shuttled off to a military induction centre, a training camp, and ultimately an American army headquarters in France, I remember the round of youthful farewells. We were aspiring novelists, poets, critics, historians, philosophers, composers, journalists. The realities of war-time were, of course, interrupting careers, and in a number of cases beginning to help change minds and temperaments; but when we last met we were still all "intellectuals," by inner vocation and by social role. Were we all to meet today, in a sentimental gathering or a formal reunion, we would all be (with only one or two exceptions)—Professors. This remarkable historic transformation is my point of departure: the absorption, or expropriation, of a whole intellectual class by the University. "Where have they all gone?" The answer is—into the groves of academe. It is a phenomenon worth studying,[2] for quite apart from its obvious sociological and educational significance it bears decisively on our set problem: the cultural responsibilities of the University at the present time. How does the academicisation of the intellectuals affect the quality of cultural life? How strong and vitalising—or, rather, how weak and unsatisfactory—are the remaining links between the academic mind and the public mind? For, no doubt about it, one of the historic

[2] See Lewis A. Coser's *Men of Ideas: A Sociologist's View* (1965); and John Kenneth Galbraith's remarks in his *The New Industrial State* (1967), ch. xxv, "The Educational and Scientific Estate."

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links is missing: we have been witnessing (most dramatically in America, but elsewhere, more slowly, too[3]) the extinction of that species of thinking man known variously as the free-floating, or unattached, or (perhaps best) the free-lance intellectual. The float has found anchor; re-attachment has come again; all the lances are ivy-covered. Or, to use the soberer language of the sociologist, "contemporary intellectual life is set in a far denser institutional matrix than it ever has been in the past."

What cultural consequences follow from this? What is the balance of educational advantage and public disadvantage when all who "think" are here, and all who "do" are out there, when basic reflectiveness and creativeness are in one place and major social action and responsibility in another?

LIVING and working abroad as I have for the past twenty years, I find myself surprised, disturbed, fascinated by the new landscape of the American mind, even if the old landscape continues to haunt me. Here, perhaps, is the present source of that traditional transatlantic pull which has always drawn the American spirit to the European scene. I recall my first sentimental journeys, in the early post-war days, to find the European intellectual masters—George Orwell, in a crooked little London house in Canonbury Square; Sartre, in a St. Germain-des-Prés café and Camus in his *Combat* newspaper office; Ernst Juenger, in a book-lined Hanoverian farmhouse; Karl Jaspers, quite unperturbed by the barbed wire outside his front door in Heidelberg; Koestler, in an up-river villa on the Seine, and Heidegger in a Black Forest ski-hut; Croce, with his Neapolitan ante-room crowded with politicians and foreigners; Silone (still in political exile) in a Swiss *bierstube*. I confess it: this was, it seemed to me, as it should be. They were all in their proper places, and they were resuming the classical talk about what Dostoevsky had in *Karamazov* called "the eternal questions"—

> "... talking about nothing but the eternal questions.... What do you believe, or don't you believe at all?... Of the eternal questions, of the existence of God and immortality. And those who do not believe in God talk of socialism or anarchism, of the transformation of all humanity on a new pattern, so that it all comes to the same, they're the same questions turned inside out...."

[3] Lord Annan, *The Disintegration of an Old Culture* (Oxford lecture, 1965).

If, as I have been suggesting, there has been over the past decades a deep and important change in the structure of the intellectual community which has made the older tradition of organisational *apartheid* unviable for most writers, critics, and artists, then we must face the question: Where are the new institutions which will foster the general circulation of ideas and the transmission of informed debate and controversy?

Familiar 19th- and 20th-century patterns have been in conspicuous dissolution. I am thinking especially of the classic triad of Movements, Magazines, and Manifestos which sustained for so long energy and innovation in cultural life. The general socialist movement, for example, which was once the carrier of a whole library of ideas and theories, is today—and not only in America but in Europe as well—a force without books or intellectual inspiration of its own; its mental life, once rich in pamphlets and pioneering social studies, has become almost completely dependent on academic social science. The ringing manifesto which appeared to announce revolutions in the arts or in politics now seems only to hint at a momentary agitation which seems to pass away with the end of the ephemeral newspaper publicity. As for those great journals and reviews which both James and John Stuart Mill were convinced were the indispensable bearers of political culture, few survive that have any centrality and none are likely to be reborn. For two centuries each first number opened with an eloquent statement of editorial purposes, optimistic, enthusiastic, and self-assured—it was to revive literature, or to renew lifeless political faiths, or to re-establish an international fraternity of men of letters. Addison promised a new urbanity, Schiller in Weimar a new heroic intelligentsia, Dostoevsky in his *Vremya* a spiritual renaissance, Croce with his *Critica* a philosophical revolution, André Gide in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* the flowering of an avant-garde, T. S. Eliot in his *Criterion* a devotion to "the highest standards both of thought and expression...."

Where, then, contemplating the breakdown of an old system of intellectual institutions, are we to look for the force, the instrument, the energy and the time to help maintain certain elements of unusual sensitivity and uncommon reflectiveness in our modern societies? I only put the question and offer no answers. Certainly to look to the University and to affirm a general

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academic responsibility for broader cultural activity is not to pre-judge the issue: it may well be that there is here neither adequate illumination nor sufficient commitment. To be sure, somewhere in its vast intellectual apparatus there is (in Arnold's phrase) "the best that is known and thought in the world." But how should it go on—and this was Matthew Arnold's ultimate injunction—"to create a current of true and fresh ideas"? Does it want (and if there is the will, is there a way) to overcome the obstacles that lie in the grievous deficiencies of the present-day haphazard system of intellectual communication? In a paper which argued precisely for such an "improvement of the extra-university institutions in the United States," Professor Edward Shils proceeded to a mordant conclusion:[4]

> Just as they have learned to exist without bookshops, so American intellectuals have learned to exist without a decent intellectual press. They suffer its ill-effects, but they do not feel them. Their consciously perceived needs are met by their professional organs, by their university libraries and laboratories. As a result, alongside a very high level of proficiency and the occasional peaks of genius in intellectual production, the educated classes of the United States are, outside their specialised professions, philistines in their intellectual consumption.

And yet the idea of a coherent intellectual public persists, even if it is only perceived flickeringly on a shadowy cave wall. A vast and neglected audience needs and awaits a new and more interfused sense of community. "Only connect" must be the message to readers and writers who are at present moving randomly in the circle of high intellectual activities of our society. Never before in the history of culture have there been, in sheer numbers, so many ingenious and creative writers of educated and intellectual concern, so many readers of subtle and lively sensibilities. To abort the emergence of this intellectual public or to ignore its demands is to assume that men of high intelligence and much learning, often well informed and habitually curious, are incapable of passing complex judgments about a wide variety of things. This assumption has distressing implications not only for the University and for culture, but also for democracy itself: for some must choose with their minds, if all are not to vote with their feet.

I DO NOT WANT to leave the impression that I am unaware of the increasingly active role that academic specialists have been playing in the outside world of science, industry, and government. But I remain struck by the fact that the University as a culture, in either the anthropological or sociological meanings of the term, has been growing into something approaching a self-sufficient, total community. Sometimes I have the feeling that Society is no longer the partner, the World has ceased to be the context. I have the picture of a young man coming on to a quadrangle to register and thus abandoning all else—for here he can now live the complete life, various and undulating: as a student, buying and reading books; as a proletarian, washing dishes and earning money; as an author and scholar, preparing articles and peddling manuscripts; as an actor and cinéaste, fiddling with new stages and old film; as an editor or publisher or sportsman or musician; as a riot leader, commanding loyal masses, or a managerial executive, in charge of great administrative machines; and all this without ever having wandered off the campus! It is, I know, a Kafka-esque vision of never leaving your room, "for the world will come to you"; but it springs from the anxiety of an observer who fears that the Multiversity, in one of its essential aspects, may be turning inward on itself, and away from society as a partner and the world as context. It can become an isolated world and alienated society of its own, cut off from realities by the paranoid consequences of its own vital powers of diligence, concentration, and professionalism.

Yet the reality, so far as it concerns contemporary intellectual life, is surely this: that the life of the mind in the University is limited and even trapped between the upper and nether stones of its two legitimate and inescapable functions. Above, it is too rarified, although academic specialisation and recondite scholarship are both necessary and proper. Below, it is too elementary, although teen-age popularisation is by any educational techniques unavoidable. Between what the scholar discovers in the marginal corrections to the manuscripts of Melville or Milton and what the student is told in the overcrowded lecture hall about *Moby Dick* or *Paradise Lost*, a whole vivifying dimension

[4] See Edward Shils, "The High Culture of the Age," in *The Arts in Society* (ed. Wilson, 1964); and "Mass Society and Its Culture," in *Culture for the Millions?* (ed. Jacobs, 1961).

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of the literary life gets lost.[5] Between what the latest research reveals about the sources of Burke's or Tocqueville's political theories and what from a thousand faculties is actually communicated to a new young generation about the substance of English conservatism or French liberalism, a whole range of vivid and relevant issues and questions simply escapes from sight and sound. In the century since John Henry Newman's famous lectures, the University is still trying to cope with, by finding a proper place for, what he called "intellectual culture." Few universities even try to match the noble ideal which Alfred North Whitehead sketched for us as the aim of education: "bringing the young under the intellectual influence of a band of imaginative scholars. . . ."

I HOPE I AM NOT being misunderstood. I do not over-value the historical role of the old-fashioned intelligentsia which, as Eliot once remarked, was "never too conspicuous for strength of intellect." It was frequently frivolous and irresponsible. Life among the free-floating, free-lance intellectuals, commuting between bohemias and barricades, was often a farce at its most harmless, a tragedy at its most dramatic.[6] An intellectual, according to a witty remark in a current periodical,[7] "may be defined as a man who speaks with general authority about a subject on which he has no particular competence. . . ." Why not specialisation, therefore, with professionals devoting themselves exclusively to their areas of specific competence? Why worry about generalists who come only with a pleasurable interest in mental achievement? Expertise is the desideratum, and this must be nurtured and subsidised. What matter if the mathematical economists talk only to the statistical sociologists, and both talk only to Ford?

The matter, I submit, is the very life and death of the idea of an intellectual public and this is, as I have suggested, one of the central problems facing both the great university and the great society. In our mass-literate environment, saturated with words and images, appetites are being constantly whetted, minds prepared, tastes cultivated—but what emerges for the consumer from the machinery of production of so-called intellectual objects? The mediocre fare of the runaway best-seller, the easy-to-read digest, the high-priced serialisation, the with-it art movement, the talked-about show. The old-fashioned man of letters, trying to make direct and dignified contact with a general reader of some sophisticated curiosity, can be dismissed as a type as dead as his historical forbear, "the sermonising cleric." But then an important piece of ground has been cut away from under modern civilised discourse. If we have no higher ground on which to stand, no purpose to stand erect, no gesture to grace our posture, and no time for more than the briefest moment of communication, then we may well come to suspect that we have reached a point where culture will be forced to exist without a coherent intellectual community. It would be a play without a plot, a theatre without a stage, a performance without an audience, the sound of applause without a shared spontaneous civilising response. It would seem to me to presage something which, controlling my gloom as best I can, would constitute a serious disjunction in the life of the mind in most places of Western society.

THERE remains the challenge to the American scholar (and not only him, here in this place). For Emerson, in 1837, the turning-point was, as he put it: "We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. . . ." Today, in 1967, the path ahead has nothing to do with either courts or continents, but it still has something to do with Emersonian largeness.

> The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be a university of knowledges. . . .

Call him a Scholar or a Thinking Man or even the Common Reader. Whatever his form or function or failings, he remains at the heart of our hope for an intellectual public.

[5] See Frank Kermode, "The University and the Literary Public," in *The Humanities and the Understanding of Reality* (ed. Stroup, 1966).

[6] Raymond Aron, *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (1957).

[7] Irving Kristol, "American Intellectuals and Foreign Policy," in *Foreign Affairs*, July 1967; see also "The Troublesome Intellectuals," in *The Public Interest*, Winter 1966.

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Ralph Robin

When Everything Falls Apart Be Polite

"He's your brother."

"Yes, but it was you that brought him here. It was you that called mother long distance. It was you that said that Grant could straighten him out." Grant was speaking, and he gave his own name a sarcastic emphasis. *Grant.* "It was you that got the idea he could go to Junior College. Junior College. Junior penitentiary would be more like it. Psychopath is what they call them now, isn't it, Dr. Kimble?"

Dr. Kimble didn't answer. He was leaning against the wall with his arms folded, though he was not exactly pressed against the wall. Grant's wife Pamela was sitting in Dr. Kimble's desk chair; Grant's brother was sitting on the desk, kicking it with his heels; Grant was walking around the room; Grant's mother was sitting in an easy-chair; Grant's brother's pal was sitting on the floor, glancing through books from the bookcase and not putting them back. There was no couch.

Dr. Kimble didn't answer and didn't have to. Grant's mother took it up: "It's all very well for you to call your brother names. All I know is he never was in any bad trouble till he came here to live with you. I'm not blaming Pamela, you understand, for bringing him here. She's a good wife, Pamela is, and thinks better of you than you deserve. She thought you could straighten him out, Grant. She thinks the world of you, Grant, and you don't appreciate it. She's been a better daughter to me, Grant, than you've ever been a son."

"I've been a better son to you than you've ever been a mother to me."

"I was as good a mother to you as I knew how."

"You never liked me. You only liked that little skunk."

"Dr. Kimble, in case you're wondering why I haven't been saying anything," Grant's brother said, "I'll tell you why, Dr. Kimble. I've been sitting here saying a little silent prayer to the Lord to enter into my brother's heart and make him kinder and more charitable."

"Kinder and more charitable! You thought nobody knew it was you who robbed all those pocketbooks when you were fifteen. You even had the nerve to show the policemen the open window——"

"Why, that's a terrible thing to say, Grant. Your brother may have his faults, but——"

"I remember he said a little silent prayer——"

"Dr. Kimble, that's just like Grant," Pamela said. "That's what he always does. He never lets anything die. He keeps a little black book——"

"Keep your God-damned trap shut for a change, will you. If I kept a little black book you know God-damned well what would be in it, you——"

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"Grant! Dr. Kimble, can't you make him stop?" said Grant's mother.

"Dr. Kimble, do you hear my own mother turning on me, taking her side? That's how she's always been. Once when I was very small, practically a baby——"

"You never were a real baby. You were born a mean old man like your father——"

Grant's brother said, "You shouldn't talk about dad that way——"

"You stay out of this, young man. Your dad——"

"Why should he stay out of this?" said Grant's brother's pal, dropping another book on the floor and not looking at anybody. "Isn't he a member of the family group? You treat him like he was——"

"I'm sick of the whole bunch of you," Pamela said. "What kind of life do I lead? I never see any of my own family."

"You've said fifty times that you only married me to get away from them. But I'll say this for——"

"You are both wrought-up," Grant's mother said.

"Excuse me, folks," said Dr. Kimble. "I was looking for a stopping place."

"Yes, of course," Grant said, looking at the clock. "It's kind of you to let us overstay our time. You're doing us all a world of good, Dr. Kimble."

"Yes, indeed, I can see that," said Grant's mother. "It was worth the trip just to be privileged to participate. I was in one of the helping professions myself for a while. I was a house mother in a sorority."

"Dr. Kimble is a real friend," said Grant's brother. "That's how I think about him, a real friend and helper. I told the Lord about him last night."

"Thanks for letting me come, Dr. Kimble," said Grant's brother's pal. "It was fun."

THE PAL SLIPPED out (leaving the books on the floor) and Grant's brother darted after him. Grant saw his mother out and shook hands with the psychiatrist at the door. Pamela somehow managed to stay. Facing Dr. Kimble, she partly closed the door behind her, and kept her hand on the knob; the gesture made her bare arm seem more bare. She stared hard at Dr. Kimble's face and then looked down and stared hard at his genital region, invoking—to Dr. Kimble's annoyance though not to his surprise—an insistent erection. "I want a private appointment," she said.

"Good heavens, that would be changing our ground rules. You're too intelligent a person to want to jeopardise the wonderful progress you've been making in the family group."

It was his third remark of the hour. His first had been, "Hello, how are you folks?" His second had been his reminder of the time. He was employing nondirective family analysis.

He tried to smile warmly, but his present warmth was not the kind that produced warm smiles.

Pamela looked furious for a moment and then smoothed her face. "You're sweet, Dr. Kimble. I'll say good-bye now."

THEY WERE GONE. He sat down in the easy-chair. It was a well-built piece out of the maze of his wife's relatives, which his wife had had reupholstered in pleasant splashy colours. "You're doing us all a world of good," he said, repeating Grant's remark. "Jeopardise the wonderful progress," he added, quoting himself.

The next scheduled family group had cancelled, making it possible for him to let the last group overstay. Patients appreciated that.

Dr. Kimble shivered. His shirt was soaked with sweat. Wearily, he undressed and took a warm shower in the private bathroom of his office. A private bathroom raised his rent, but he couldn't do without it. He took a clean shirt from a closet shelf. He dressed. He put on the sports coat he had been wearing but, on second thought, took it off and hung it on the back of a chair to air. He took a different sports coat from a hanger in the closet and put it on. He opened a window wide, took off the new sports coat, and put on, instead, a heavy sweater. His patient,

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that Pamela—how could she go around with bare arms? But she must have had a coat in the waiting-room.

He had no desire to do anything till the next gang burst in. He had no desire, for that matter, to employ nondirective family analysis. But there was nothing else in life he could still do—"still get away with," he phrased it to himself.

He could no longer really talk to anybody or really listen to anybody, and above all he could no longer be alone with anybody: except his wife, and lately he had felt something nibbling even there.

He sat at his desk; he sat on his desk; he sat in the easy-chair again; he got up and walked around the room. He remembered the books on the floor and sat down on the floor to put them back. Dr. Partridge, Dr. Partridge, he thought, what did you do to me?

Or what had Dr. Partridge not done to him? That was the more insightful question. When Dr. Partridge had accepted him for his training analysis, after three lesser men had turned him down, everybody had congratulated him—and jealously congratulated him. Dr. Partridge was insightful, Dr. Partridge was prestigeful, and Dr. Partridge was powerful. It was said among the young psychiatrists that he pretty much had his own way in the Psychoanalytic Institute.

He had his own way, an odd way, in Dr. Kimble's training analysis.

"Shall I lie down?"

"What's the matter? Are you sleepy?"

"No, but——"

"Do you think we're in a *New Yorker* cartoon?"

"No, the——"

"Want a drink? I was about to have a brandy."

"No, I——"

"Freud made Jung drink."

Partridge did not, however, make Kimble drink, though the training analyst sipped brandy all through the hour.

Three weeks later the candidate had not yet told the analyst anything about his parents, anything about his current interpersonal relationships, or a single dream or daydream.

"Dr. Kimble"—the training analyst deviated only once from that formality of address, although the candidate longed to be called Walt—"Dr. Kimble, Freud went wrong very early when he introduced the irrelevant concept of the transference. Later he went altogether haywire with the countertransference. He had been on the right track in the first place with insights."

"I don't think the chronology can be so exactly——"

"Don't take the conversation off yourself. He was on the right track with insights. He once made the marvellous comparison of the analysis with the aseptic conditions of a surgical operation, but nowadays analyses are as septic as some of our present operating rooms. Will you have some brandy? No? I am only asking you now to be polite. When everything falls apart be polite. I forget where I heard that, possibly from my own training analyst. You only drink on occasions, I know."

Dr. Partridge did not pour any brandy for himself, and Dr. Kimble felt guilty. He was about to tell Dr. Partridge that he was feeling guilty when Dr. Partridge lifted his hand and said: "Dr. Kimble, current theory, metaphorically speaking, does not see the analysis as an aseptic operation but sees it, on the contrary, as a tennis game, batting a ball back and forth with all the malice of tennis. If you ever want to study malice in earnest, as expressed in non-verbal gesture, just watch the faces of tennis players. Oh, the younger analysts may talk about love. They're always talking about love. The *Zeitgeist* is crazy about love, if you are willing to take his word for it. But what Herr Zeitgeist is really interested in (and don't let him con you for a minute) is malice. Herr Zeitgeist isn't interested in malice to reduce it in the world. It isn't even the old familiar pattern of condemning malice in others because he's malicious himself. No, sir. He's malicious and he wants more malice in himself and in everybody else."

Dr. Partridge went over to the decanter,

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which had a little table to itself, and poured himself a glass of brandy. "I won't ask you again, Dr. Kimble. When you reform, let me know."

"I had a dream last night, Dr. Partridge, that I want very much to tell you about. It was about you, as a matter of fact."

"Go ahead. Shoot." Dr. Partridge immediately walked out of the room. He returned carrying a pitcher of water, poured some into a glass, and began to wash the leaves of a potted kumquat tree, which was on another little table.

"Go ahead. Shoot."

"You were lying on the classical couch. No, you were just sitting on it, and——"

"Dr. Kimble, did you know that many primitive peoples attribute dreams to the actual wanderings of the souls of those dreamed about? Wouldn't that be an amusing thing to believe, that my soul sneaked into your dream? I dreamt about you last night too; so we're even. By the way, when I spoke of primitive peoples I was referring to so-called primitive peoples: contemporary or recent non-literate cultures. There is one fallacy most anthropologists can't get out of their minds or their books, you know. It is the fallacious idea that these contemporary primitives resemble the actual primitives who were living on earth, say a hundred thousand years ago. I don't for a moment believe, by the way, that primitive man led a life that was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. That remark of Hobbes has influenced all speculation on the subject. It's very likely that our early ancestors were gentle, pleasant, imaginative people, and that cruelty came in with the domestication of animals."

THE NEXT DAY, when Dr. Kimble came for his hour, Dr. Partridge was feeding two large cats. Their unexpectedness made them look enormous, like tame tigers; they were tiger-striped.

"This is only temporary," Dr. Partridge said. "I've got this patient, this girl. Well, she's not really a girl—she's in her thirties, for God's sake. But I'm old. She's got a cat problem. Her apartment house was going to evict her if she didn't get rid of her two cats. She's in a state about it. Her friends have all been advising her to 'put them to sleep.' Isn't that a horrible phrase? Corruption of language is corruption of thought, and the converse is true. It's notorious how badly we psychoanalysts write. We do so, I believe, because we think so badly."

There was a conspicuous object on the training analyst's desk. It was a box covered with flowered oilcloth; it contained a shredded brown material. Even Dr. Partridge could not help noticing the direction of Walt Kimble's attention.

"That," he said, "is known as Kitty Litter."

Thereafter, the cats became an important part of the analytic process. They wandered all over the room and tore the spines of books with their claws. They sat on Dr. Partridge's lap and purred. Dr. Partridge purred also. They sat on Dr. Kimble's lap, but he made them anxious and they did not stay long. They knocked over and broke the decanter of brandy, and the human two-group spent most of the hour cleaning up. Dr. Partridge bought a new decanter, and brought in a heavy little carved chest to keep it in.

The cats attacked the fruits hanging from the potted kumquat tree. Dr. Partridge pulled them away and chided them. "No, no, Tommy. No, no, Katherine."

He considered. "I think we had better eat the ripe ones. Tommy and Katherine will ruin them sooner or later, even though I've been moving the plant into the lavatory overnight."

He broke off the two best kumquats: one for the candidate, one for himself.

Dr. Kimble bit into his. It was really very good, for a kumquat: he had never tasted such a sweet kumquat. In his childhood Dr. Kimble had been the child in his family who liked kumquats, and he had been obliged to like them even when they were too sour. He was glad to get something from his analyst, and he wanted something more. "How about a glass of brandy with this?" Dr. Kimble said to his analyst.

"You are relaxing your rigidities," his

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analyst said. "I am pleased, I am pleased." He hurried to the little carved chest—American primitive?—resting on the brandy's table, and took out the new decanter.

After that, Dr. Partridge did listen to him more and once even let him present an entire dream.

THE ANALYSIS came to an end rather suddenly. "Rather suddenly"—the phrase was from the final session. No, it was not actually the final session, but one a few weeks earlier. It persisted in Walt Kimble's mind as final.

He noticed something strange as soon as he entered the room. What was it? The cats were gone!

The decanter of brandy was on the analyst's desk with glasses beside it, and Dr. Partridge poured drinks before he said anything. "You may notice, Dr. Kimble, that the cats are gone. The patient I told you about, the girl I was taking care of them for, got married to a man with a house. She took them back. To tell you the truth, after all that fuss she made before, she didn't want them very much, but I put the pressure on. I think she is offended with them because they quite obviously failed to recognise her as someone special during her visits, which are only once a week after all. They occasionally sat on her lap, but very impersonally. If you ask me, she'll 'put them to sleep' when I'm dead. And that's what I'm coming to. My ticker is likely to stop ticking rather suddenly, Walt. Although your analysis has been of rather short duration—it's only a little over two years, isn't it?—you have made wonderful progress, and I think we can now rapidly tie up the odds and ends and bring it to a conclusion. It would be a hell of a trick for me to drop dead with you still unqualified and practically having to start all over with somebody else. The Institute will think the time rather short, of course, but they'd think ten years short."

IN DR. KIMBLE'S office, one of the books that Grant's brother's pal had pulled out of the case and discarded was the book of commemorative essays, the *Festschrift*, for Dr. Partridge. Grant's brother's pal could hardly have missed it. There were a dozen or so copies scattered among the books in the bookcase and on the bookshelves across the room. Dr. Kimble had meant to give them away but had never done so.

He turned to his own essay, then quickly closed the book before he had time to re-read a single sentence. Nevertheless, he remembered what he had written: that the insightful Partridge would naturally overemphasise insight; that his unclouded mind would tend to minimalise the rolling fogs of the transference and the counter-transference; that his lovable eccentricities were seasonings to the roast beef of his genius.

Dr. Kimble opened a box of fudge-nut cookies and began to eat them rapidly.

He thought of his last few individual patients: those he had treated just before he had committed himself to nondirective family analysis. Two had affected him for entire hours as Grant's wife Pamela had for a minute or two. Another female patient—a young girl, a college student—had filled him with chaste daydreams of eloping with her and starting a new life, handweaving tapestries in Mexico. Another college student—this one a young man—had brought him more disturbing thoughts.

There also had been the nuclear physicist, whose head was carefully clipped, like that of a lieutenant in the Marines. This patient often explained what he wanted from analysis. "You see, Walter, I consider you an instrument I can use advantageously to hone the cutting blade of my creativity." The instrument wanted to bash the patient's head in—his military head.

While he fretted with sexual desire, or daydreamed of weaving with that charming girl, or pondered the meaning of homosexuality, or (clenching his hands) seethed at the arrogance of the nuclear physicist, he absorbed not a word of what the patient was saying. And all of the patients—that charming girl no less than the others—expected him to remember every piece of nonsense they had spoken.

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He got rid of them, one by one, by assuring them fervently that they were well now: they had made wonderful progress.

He was forty-four years old. It was four minutes to three, and three was the time of the next appointment. Indeed, Dr. Kimble could hear voices through the double door, supposedly designed to obstruct all speech. He rubbed his ears. He put back the remaining books. He jumped up and pulled off his sweater. He brushed his trousers with a clothes brush. He cleaned his teeth, using a towel as a bib. He put on the fresh sports coat. He took the other one from the chair and hung it in the closet. He hung up the sweater, also. He closed the window. He remembered a remark of his training analyst, he remembered now one remark out of the thousands: "When everything falls apart be polite." He opened the door.

"Hello, folks. How are you? Isn't it a beautiful cool day?"

"Dr. Kimble, what kind of wife and mother do you think it——"

"Wife and mother! What kind of a husband and father——"

"I don't want to go in there. I want to go home."

"Oh, shut up, you little snot."

"I hope you won't talk to our children——"

"Our children! I told you it was all off——"

"All off! I've sent out the——"

"If she says it's off, it's off. Dr. Kimble, take notice I am not a member——"

Before Tomorrow

It was always the same
As far as can be remembered,
They are told and the long trains
Jump on the line. It was so.
And the earth shivered even before winter.

It is not an unusual journey
As far as can be said for such journeys,
They say and the wheels sing
After the hasting trains. That was true.
And spring lay in sorrow.

It is difficult to tell how long,
It is easier to imagine. . . .
They remember and the moving is begun.
The rocking trains are on time. It was long.
And the coming home was a sad affair.

It is unfortunate; but then,
As you know, misfortune does not discern,
They learn and the day before is forgotten.
The trains are empty on the siding.
And it will always be the same.

R. E. Goold

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Bernard Lewis

The Assassins

An Historical Essay

IN THE YEAR 1332, when King Philip VI of France was contemplating a new crusade to recapture the lost Holy Places of Christendom, a German priest called Brocardus composed a treatise offering the king guidance and advice for the conduct of this enterprise. Brocardus, who had spent some time in Armenia, devoted an important part of his treatise to the peculiar hazards of such an expedition to the East, and the precautions needed to guard against them. Among these dangers, said Brocardus,

> I name the Assassins, who are to be cursed and fled. They sell themselves, are thirsty for human blood, kill the innocent for a price, and care nothing for either life or salvation. Like the devil, they transfigure themselves into angels of light, by imitating the gestures, garments, languages, customs and acts of various nations and peoples; thus, hidden in sheep's clothing, they suffer death as soon as they are recognised. Since indeed I have not seen them, but know this of them only by repute or by true writings, I cannot reveal more, nor give fuller information. I cannot show how to recognise them by their customs or any other signs, for in these things they are unknown to me as to others also; nor can I show how to apprehend them by their name, for so execrable is their profession, and so abominated by all, that they conceal their own names as much as they can. I therefore know only one single remedy for the safeguarding and protection of the king, that in all the royal household, for whatever service, however small or brief or mean, none should be admitted, save those whose country, place, lineage, condition and person are certainly, fully and clearly known.

For Brocardus, the Assassins are hired, secret murderers, of a peculiarly skilful and dangerous kind. Though naming them among the hazards of the East, he does not explicitly connect them with any particular place, sect, or nation, nor ascribe any religious beliefs or political purposes to them. They are simply ruthless and competent killers, and must be guarded against as such. Indeed, by the 13th century, the word Assassin, in variant forms, had already passed into European usage in this general sense of hired professional murderer. The Florentine chronicler Giovanni Villani, who died in 1348, tells how the lord of Lucca sent "his assassins" (*i suoi assassini*) to Pisa to kill a troublesome enemy there. Even earlier, Dante, in a passing reference in the 19th canto of the Inferno, speaks of "the treacherous assassin" (*lo perfido assassin*); his 14th-century commentator Francesco da Buti, explaining a term which for some readers at the time may still have been strange and obscure, remarks: *Assassino è colui che uccide altrui per danari*—"An assassin is one who kills others for money." Since then "assassin" has become a common noun in most European languages. It means a murderer, more particularly one who kills by stealth or treachery, whose victim is a public figure and whose motive is fanaticism or greed.

IT WAS NOT ALWAYS SO. The word first appears in the chronicles of the Crusades, as the name of

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a strange group of Muslim sectaries in the Levant, led by a mysterious figure known as the Old Man of the Mountain, and abhorrent, by their beliefs and practices, to good Christians and Muslims alike. One of the earliest descriptions of the sect occurs in the report of an envoy sent to Egypt and Syria in 1175 by the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa.

> Note, that on the confines of Damascus, Antioch and Aleppo there is a certain race of Saracens in the mountains, who in their own vernacular are called *Heyssessini*, and in Roman *segnors de montana*. This breed of men live without law; they eat swine's flesh against the law of the Saracens, and make use of all women without distinction, including their mothers and sisters. They live in the mountains and are well-nigh impregnable, for they withdraw into well-fortified castles. Their country is not very fertile, so that they live on their cattle. They have among them a Master, who strikes the greatest fear into all the Saracen princes both far and near, as well as the neighbouring Christian lords. For he has the habit of killing them in an astonishing way. The method by which this is done is as follows: this prince possesses in the mountains numerous and most beautiful palaces, surrounded by very high walls, so that none can enter except by a small and very well-guarded door. In these palaces he has many of the sons of his peasants brought up from early childhood. He has them taught various languages, as Latin, Greek, Roman, Saracen as well as many others. These young men are taught by their teachers from their earliest youth to their full manhood, that they must obey the lord of their land in all his words and commands; and that if they do so, he, who has power over all living gods, will give them the joys of paradise. They are also taught that they cannot be saved if they resist his will in anything. Note that, from the time when they are taken in as children, they see no one but their teachers and masters and receive no other instruction until they are summoned to the presence of the Prince to kill someone. When they are in the presence of the Prince, he asks them if they are willing to obey his commands, so that he may bestow paradise upon them. Whereupon, as they have been instructed, and without any objection or doubt, they throw themselves at his feet and reply with fervour that they will obey him in all things that he may command. Thereupon the Prince gives each one of them a golden dagger and sends them out to kill whichever prince he has marked down.

Writing a few years later, William, Archbishop of Tyre, included a brief account of the sect in his history of the Crusading states:

> There is in the province of Tyre, otherwise called Phoenicia, and in the diocese of Tortosa, a people who possess ten strong castles, with their dependent villages; their number, according to what we have often heard, is about 60,000 or more. It is their custom to install their master and choose their chief, not by hereditary right, but solely by virtue of merit. Disdaining any other title of dignity, they called him the Elder. The bond of submission and obedience that binds this people to their Chief is so strong, that there is no task so arduous, difficult or dangerous that any one of them would not undertake to perform it with the greatest zeal, as soon as the Chief has commanded it. If, for example, there be a prince who is hated or mistrusted by this people, the Chief gives a dagger to one or more of his followers. At once whoever receives the command sets out on his mission, without considering the consequences of the deed nor the possibility of escape. Zealous to complete his task, he toils and labours as long as may be needful, until chance gives him the opportunity to carry out his chief's orders. Both our people and the Saracens call them *Assissini*; we do not know the origin of this name.

In 1192 the daggers of the Assassins, which had already struck down a number of Muslim princes and officers, found their first Crusader victim—Conrad of Montferrat, King of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. This murder made a profound impression among the Crusaders, and most of the chroniclers of the Third Crusade have something to say about the dreaded sectaries, their strange beliefs, their terrible methods, and their redoubtable chief. "I shall now relate things about this Elder," says the German chronicler Arnold of Lübeck,

> which appear ridiculous, but which are attested to me by the evidence of reliable witnesses. This Old Man has by his witchcraft so bemused the men of his country, that they neither worship nor believe in any God but himself. Likewise he entices them in a strange manner with such hopes and with promises of such pleasures with eternal enjoyment, that they prefer rather to die than to live. Many of them even, when standing on a high wall, will jump off at his nod or command, and, shattering their skulls, die a miserable death. The most blessed, so he affirms, are those who shed the blood of men and in revenge for such deeds themselves suffer death. When therefore any of them have chosen to die in this way, murdering someone by craft and then themselves dying so blessedly in revenge for him, he himself hands them knives which are, so to speak, consecrated to this affair, and then intoxicates them with such a potion that they are plunged into ecstasy and oblivion, displays to them by his magic certain fantastic dreams, full of pleasures and delights, or rather of trumpery, and promises them eternal possession of these things in reward for such deeds.

At first it was the fanatical devotion, rather than the murderous methods, of the Assassins

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that struck the imagination of Europe. "You have me more in your power," says a Provençal troubadour to his lady, "than the Old Man has his Assassins, who go to kill his mortal enemies. . . ." "Just as the Assassins serve their master unfailingly," says another, "so I have served Love with unswerving loyalty." In an anonymous love-letter, the writer assures his lady: "I am your Assassin, who hopes to win paradise through doing your commands." In time, however, it was murder, rather than loyalty, that made the more powerful impression, and gave the word *assassin* the meaning that it has retained to the present day.

As THE STAY OF the Crusaders in the Levant lengthened, more information about the Assassins became available, and there were even some Europeans who met and talked with them. The Templars and Hospitallers succeeded in establishing an ascendancy over the Assassin castles, and collected tribute from them. William of Tyre records an abortive approach by the Old Man of the Mountain to the King of Jerusalem, proposing some form of alliance. His continuator relates a somewhat questionable story of how Count Henry of Champagne, returning from Armenia in 1198, was entertained in his castle by the Old Man, who ordered a number of his henchmen to leap to their deaths from the ramparts for the edification of his guest, and then hospitably offered to provide others for his requirements: "and if there was any man who had done him an injury, he should let him know, and he would have him killed." Somewhat more plausibly, the English historian Matthew of Paris reports the arrival in Europe in 1238 of an embassy from some Muslim rulers, "and principally from the Old Man of the Mountain." They had come to seek help from the French and the English against the new, looming menace of the Mongols from the East. By 1250, when St. Louis led a crusade to the Holy Land, it was possible for him to exchange gifts and missions with the Old Man of the Mountain of that time. An Arabic-speaking friar, Yves the Breton, accompanied the king's messengers to the Assassins, and discussed religion with their chief. In his account, through the mists of ignorance and prejudice, one can faintly discern some of the known doctrines of the Islamic sect to which the Assassins belonged.

The Crusaders knew the Assassins only as a sect in Syria, and show little or no awareness of their place in Islam, or their connections with other groups elsewhere in the Muslim lands. One of the best informed of crusading writers on Muslim affairs, James of Vitry, Bishop of Acre, noted at the beginning of the 13th century that the sect had begun in Persia —but seems to have known no more than that. In the second half of the century, however, new and direct information appeared concerning the parent sect in Persia. The first informant was William of Rubruck, a Flemish priest sent on a mission by the King of France to the court of the Great Khan at Karakorum in Mongolia, in the years 1253–5. William's journey took him through Persia where, he notes, the mountains of the Assassins adjoin the Caspian mountains south of the Caspian Sea. At Karakorum, William was struck by the elaborate security precautions, the reason for which was that the Great Khan had heard that no less than forty Assassins, in various disguises, had been sent to murder him. In response he sent one of his brothers with an army against the land of the Assassins, and ordered him to kill them all.

The word William uses for the Assassins in Persia is *Muliech* or *Mulihet*—a corruption of the Arabic *mulḥid*, plural *malāḥida*. This word, literally meaning deviator, was commonly applied to deviant religious sects, and particularly to the Ismailis, the group to which the Assassins belonged. It appears again in the account of a very much more famous traveller, Marco Polo, who passed through Persia in 1273, and describes the fortress and valley of Alamut, for long the headquarters of the sect.

"The Old Man was called in their language ALOADIN. He had caused a certain valley between two mountains to be enclosed, and had turned it into a garden, the largest and most beautiful that ever was seen, filled with every variety of fruit. In it were erected pavilions and palaces the most elegant that can be imagined, all covered with gilding and exquisite painting. And there were runnels too, flowing freely with wine and milk and honey and water; and numbers of ladies and of the most beautiful damsels in the world, who could play on all manner of instruments, and sung most sweetly, and danced in a manner that it was charming to behold. For the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually Paradise. So he had fashioned it after the description that Mahommet gave of his Paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water,

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and full of lovely women for the delectation of all its inmates. And sure enough the Saracens of those parts believed that it *was* Paradise!

"Now no man was allowed to enter the Garden save those whom he intended to be his ASHISHIN. There was a Fortress at the entrance to the Garden, strong enough to resist all the world, and there was no other way to get in. He kept at his Court a number of the youths of the country, from twelve to twenty years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering, and to these he used to tell tales about Paradise, just as Mahommet had been wont to do, and they believed in him just as the Saracens believe in Mahommet. Then he would introduce them into his garden, some four, or six, or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. So when they awoke, they found themselves in the Garden.

"When therefore they awoke, and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was Paradise in very truth. And the ladies and damsels dallied with them to their hearts' content, so that they had what young men would have; and with their own good will they never would have quitted the place.

"Now this Prince whom we call the Old One kept his Court in grand and noble style, and made those simple hill-folk about him believe firmly that he was a great prophet. And when he wanted one of his *Ashishin* to send on any mission, he would cause that potion whereof I spoke to be given to one of the youths in the garden, and then had him carried into his Palace. So when the young man awoke, he found himself in the Castle, and no longer in that Paradise; whereat he was not over well pleased. He was then conducted to the Old Man's presence, and bowed before him with great veneration as believing himself to be in the presence of a true prophet. The Prince would then ask whence he came, and he would reply that he came from Paradise! and that it was exactly such as Mahommet had described it in the Law. This of course gave the others who stood by, and who had not been admitted, the greatest desire to enter therein.

"So when the Old Man would have any Prince slain, he would say to such a youth: 'Go thou and slay So and So; and when thou returnest my angels shall bear thee into Paradise. And should'st thou die, nevertheless even so I will send my Angels to carry thee back into Paradise.' So he caused them to believe; and thus there was no order of his that they would not affront any peril to execute, for the great desire they had to get back into that Paradise of his. And in this manner the Old Man got his people to murder any one whom he desired to get rid of. Thus, too, the great dread that he inspired all Princes withal, made them become his tributaries in order that he might abide at peace and amity with them.

"I should also tell you that the Old Man had certain others under him, who copied his proceedings and acted exactly in the same manner. One of these was sent into the territory of Damascus, and the other into Kurdistan."

IN SPEAKING OF the Ismailis of Persia as Assassins, and of their leader as the Old Man, Marco Polo—or his transcriber—was using terms already familiar in Europe. They had, however, come from Syria, not from Persia. The Arabic and Persian sources make it quite clear that "Assassin" was a local name, applied only to the Ismailis of Syria, and never to those of Persia or any other country. The title "Old Man of the Mountain" was also Syrian. It would be natural for the Ismailis to speak of their chief as Old Man or Elder, Arabic *Shaykh* or Persian *Pīr*, a common term of respect among Muslims. The specific designation "Old Man of the Mountain," however, seems to have been used only in Syria, and perhaps only among the Crusaders, since it has not yet come to light in any Arabic text of the period.

The use of these terms, for both the Syrian and Persian branches of the sect, became general. Marco Polo's description, followed some half-century later by a similar account from Odoric of Pordenone, deepened the impact which the Syrian Assassins had made on the imagination of Europe. The stories of the gardens of paradise, the death-leap of the devotees, the superlative skill of the Assassins in disguise and in murder, and the mysterious figure of their chief, the Old Man of the Mountain, find many echoes in the literatures of Europe, spreading from history and travel into poetry, fiction, and myth.

THEY HAD THEIR EFFECT on politics also. From quite an early date there were some who detected the hand of the Old Man in political murders or attempts at murder

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even in Europe. In 1158, when Frederick Barbarossa was besieging Milan, an "Assassin" was allegedly caught in his camp; in 1195, when King Richard Coeur de Lion was at Chinon, no less than fifteen so-called Assassins were apprehended, and confessed that they had been sent by the King of France to kill him. Before long, such charges became frequent, and numerous rulers or leaders were accused of being in league with the Old Man and of employing the services of his emissaries to destroy an inconvenient enemy. There can be little doubt that these charges are baseless. The chiefs of the Assassins, in Persia or in Syria, had no interest in the plots and intrigues of Western Europe; the European needed no help from outside in the various arts of murder. By the 14th century, the word assassin had come to mean murderer, and no longer implied any specific connection with the sect to which that name had originally belonged.

The sect continued, however, to arouse interest. The first Western attempt at a scholarly investigation of their history seems to be that of Denis Lebey de Batilly, published in Lyons in 1603. The date is significant. The pagan ethics of the Renaissance had brought a revival of murder as an instrument of policy; the wars of religion had elevated it to a pious duty. The emergence of the new monarchies, in which one man could determine the politics and religion of the state, made assassination an effective as well as an acceptable weapon. Princes and prelates were willing to hire murderers to strike down their political or religious opponents—and theorists were forthcoming to clothe the naked logic of violence in a decent covering of ideology.

Lebey de Batilly's purpose was modest; to explain the true historic meaning of a term which had acquired new currency in France. His study is based exclusively on Christian sources, and does not therefore go much beyond what was known in Europe in the 13th century. But even without new evidence there could be new insights. These must have come easily to the generation that had seen William of Nassau shot by a hireling of the King of Spain, Henry III of France stabbed by a Dominican friar, and Elizabeth of England hard pressed to escape her consecrated would-be murderers.

THE FIRST REALLY IMPORTANT ADVANCE towards solving the mystery of Assassin origins and identity was a product of the early Enlightenment. It came in 1697, with the publication of Bartholomé d'Herbelot's great *Bibliothèque orientale*, a pioneer work containing most of what orientalist scholarship in Europe could at that time offer on the history, religion, and literature of Islam. Here for the first time an enquiring and undogmatic Western scholar made use of Muslim sources—the few that were then known in Europe—and tried to situate the Persian and Syrian Assassins in the broader context of Islamic religious history. They belonged, he showed, to the Ismailis, an important dissident sect, and itself an off-shoot of the Shi'a, whose quarrel with the Sunnis was the major religious schism in Islam. The heads of the Ismaili sect claimed to be Imams, descendants of Isma'il ibn Ja'far, and through him of the Prophet Muhammad by his daughter Fatima and his son-in-law Ali. During the 18th century other orientalists and historians took up the theme, and added new details on the history, beliefs, and connections of the Assassins and their parent sect, the Ismailis. Some writers also tried to explain the origin of the name Assassin —a word generally assumed to be Arabic, but not as yet attested in any known Arabic text. Several etymologies were proposed, none of them very convincing.

The beginning of the 19th century saw a new burst of interest in the Assassins. The French Revolution and its aftermath had revived public interest in conspiracy and murder; Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt and Syria brought new and closer contacts with the Islamic orient, and new opportunities for Islamic studies. After some attempts by lesser men to satisfy public interest, Silvestre de Sacy, the greatest Arabic scholar of the time, turned his attention to the theme, and in 1809 read a memoir to the *Institut de France*, on the dynasty of the Assassins and the etymology of their name.

Silvestre de Sacy's memoir was a landmark in Assassin studies. In addition to the handful of oriental sources used by previous scholars, he was able to draw on a rich collection of Arabic manuscripts in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris, including several of the major Arabic chronicles of the Crusades hitherto unknown to Western scholarship; his analysis of the sources wholly superseded the efforts of earlier European writers. Certainly the most important part of the memoir was his solution, once and for all, of the vexed problem of the origin of the word "Assassin." After examining and dismissing previous theories, he

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showed conclusively that the word came from the Arabic *ḥashīsh*, and suggested that the variant forms Assassini, Assissini, Heyssisini, etc., in the crusading sources were based on the alternative Arabic forms *ḥashīshī* and *ḥashshāsh* (colloquial plurals, *ḥashīshiyyīn* and *ḥashshāshīn*). In confirmation of this he was able to adduce several Arabic texts in which the sectaries were called *ḥashīshī*, but none in which they were called *ḥashshāsh*. Since then, the form *ḥashīshī* has been confirmed by additional texts that have come to light—but there is still, as far as is known, no text in which the Ismailis are called *ḥashshāsh*. It would therefore seem that this part of Silvestre de Sacy's explanation must be abandoned, and all the European variants derived from the Arabic *ḥashīshī* and its plural *ḥashīshiyyīn*.

THIS REVISION raises again the question of the significance, as distinct from the etymology, of the term. The original meaning of *ḥashīsh* in Arabic is herbage, more particularly dry herbage or fodder. Later it was specialised to denote Indian hemp, *cannabis sativa*, the narcotic effects of which were already known to the Muslims in the Middle Ages. *Ḥashshāsh*, a more modern word, is the common term for a hashish-taker. Silvestre de Sacy, while not adopting the opinion held by many later writers that the Assassins were so called because they were addicts, nevertheless explains the name as due to the secret use of hashish by the leaders of the sect, to give their emissaries a foretaste of the delights of paradise that awaited them on the successful completion of their missions. He links this interpretation with the story told by Marco Polo, and also found in other eastern and western sources, of the secret "gardens of paradise" into which the drugged devotees were introduced.

Despite its early appearance and wide currency, this story is almost certainly untrue. The use and effects of hashish were known at the time, and were no secret; the use of the drug by the sectaries is attested neither by Ismaili nor by serious Sunni authors. Even the name *ḥashīshī* is local to Syria, and is probably a term of popular abuse. In all probability it was the name that gave rise to the story, rather than the reverse. Of various explanations that have been offered, the likeliest is that it was an expression of contempt for the wild beliefs and extravagant behaviour of the sectaries—a derisive comment on their conduct rather than a description of their practices. For Western observers in particular, such stories may also have served to provide a rational explanation for behaviour that was otherwise totally inexplicable.

Silvestre de Sacy's memoir opened the way for a series of further studies on the subject. Certainly the most widely read of these was the *History of the Assassins* of the Austrian orientalist Joseph von Hammer (published in German in Stuttgart in 1818 and in French and English translations in 1833 and 1835). Hammer's history, though based on oriental sources, is very much a tract for the times—a warning against "the pernicious influence of secret societies . . . and . . . the dreadful prostitution of religion to the horrors of unbridled ambition." For him, the Assassins were a

> union of impostors and dupes which, under the mask of a more austere creed and severer morals, undermined all religion and morality; that order of murderers, beneath whose daggers the lords of nations fell; all powerful, because, for the space of three centuries, they were universally dreaded, until the den of ruffians fell with the khaliphate, to whom, as the centre of spiritual and temporal power, it had at the outset sworn destruction, and by whose ruins it was itself overwhelmed.

In case any of his readers miss the point, Hammer compares the Assassins with the Templars, the Jesuits, the Illuminati, the Freemasons, and the regicides of the French National Convention.

> As in the west, revolutionary societies arose from the bosom of the Freemasons, so in the east, did the Assassins spring from the Ismailites. . . . The insanity of the enlighteners, who thought that by mere preaching, they could emancipate nations from the protecting care of princes, and the leading-strings of practical religion, has shown itself in the most terrible manner by the effects of the French revolution, as it did in Asia, in the reign of Hassan II.

Hammer's book exercised considerable influence, and for about a century and a half was the main source of the popular Western image of the Assassins. Meanwhile scholarly research was progressing, especially in France, where much work was done in discovering, editing, translating and exploiting Arabic and Persian texts relating to the history of the Ismailis in Syria and Persia. Among the most important were the works of two Persian historians of the Mongol period, Juvayni and Rashid al-Din; both of them had access to Ismaili writings

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from Alamut, and, by using them, were able to provide the first connected account of the Ismaili principality in Northern Persia.

AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD was made possible by the appearance of material of a new kind. The use of Muslim sources had added much to the knowledge derived from mediaeval European works—but even these were mainly Sunni; though far better informed than the Western chroniclers and travellers, they were if anything even more hostile to the doctrines and purposes of the Ismailis. Now, for the first time, information came to light which reflected directly the point of view of the Ismailis themselves. Already in the 18th century travellers had noted that there were still Ismailis in some villages in Central Syria. In 1810 Rousseau, the French consul-general in Aleppo, stimulated by Silvestre de Sacy, published a description of the Ismailis in Syria in his own day, with geographical, historical, and religious data. The sources are not given, but appear to be local and oral. Silvestre de Sacy himself provided some additional explanatory notes. Rousseau was the first European to draw on such local informants, bringing to Europe for the first time some scraps of information from the Ismailis themselves. In 1812 he published extracts from an Ismaili book obtained in Masyaf, one of the main Ismaili centres in Syria. Though it contains little historical information, it throws some light on the religious doctrines of the sect. Other texts from Syria also found their way to Paris, where some of them were later published. During the 19th century a number of European and American travellers visited the Ismaili villages in Syria, and reported briefly on the ruins and their inhabitants.

Less information was available from Persia, where the remains of the great castle of Alamut still stand.[1] But there were more than remains to commemorate the past greatness of the Ismailis in Persia. In 1811, Consul Rousseau from Aleppo, in the course of a journey to Persia, enquired about Ismailis, and was surprised to learn that there were still many in the country who owed allegiance to an Imam of the line of Ismail. His name was Shah Khalilullah, and he resided in a village called Kehk, near Qumm, half-way between Tehran and Isfahan.

> "I may add" [says Rousseau] "that Shah Khalilullah is revered almost as a god by his followers, who attribute the gift of miracles to him, enrich him continually with what they bequeath, and often embellish him with the pompous title of Caliph. There are Ismailis as far away as India, and they can be seen regularly coming to Kehk from the banks of the Ganges and the Indus, to receive the blessings of their Imam, in return for the pious and magnificent offerings which they bring him."

In 1825 an English traveller, J. B. Fraser, confirmed the survival of Ismailis in Persia, and their continued devotion to their chief, though they no longer practised murder at his behest: "even at this day the sheikh or head of the sect is most blindly revered by those who yet remain, though their zeal has lost the deep and terrific character which it once bore." There were followers of the sect in India too, who were "particularly devoted to their saint." Their previous chief, Shah Khalilullah, had been murdered in Yazd some years earlier (in fact in 1817), by rebels against the governor of the city. "He was succeeded in his religious capacity by one of his sons, who meets with a similar respect from the sect."

THE NEXT ACCESSION of information came from quite a different source. In December 1850, a somewhat unusual case of murder came before the criminal court in Bombay. Four men had been set upon and murdered, in broad daylight, as the result of a difference of opinion within the religious community to which they belonged. Nineteen men were tried, and four of them were sentenced to death and hanged. The victims and their attackers were both members of a local Muslim sect known as the Khojas—a community of some tens of thousands, mainly traders, in the Bombay Presidency and other parts of India.

The incident arose from a dispute that had been going on for more than twenty years. It had begun in 1827, when a group of Khojas had refused to make the customary payments to the head of their sect, who resided in Persia. This was the son of Shah Khalilullah, who had succeeded his murdered father in 1817. In 1818 the

[1] In 1833, in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, a British officer called Colonel W. Monteith described a journey in which he had got as far as the entrance to the Alamut valley but did not actually reach or identify the castle. This was achieved by a brother officer, Lieutenant-Colonel [Sir] Justin Sheil, whose account appeared in the same journal in 1838. A third British officer, named Stewart, visited the castle a few years later, after which nearly a century passed before the exploration of Alamut was resumed.

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Shah of Persia had appointed him governor of Mehellat and Qumm, and had given him the title of Aga Khan. It is by this title that he and his descendants are usually known.

Confronted with this sudden refusal by a group of his followers in India to pay their religious dues, the Aga Khan sent a special envoy from Persia to Bombay, to bring them back into the fold. With the envoy went the Aga Khan's grandmother, who "herself appears to have harangued the Bombay Khojas" in an effort to regain their allegiance. Most of the Khojas remained faithful to their chief, but a small group persisted in their opposition, maintaining that they owed no obedience to the Aga Khan and denying that the Khojas were in any way connected with him. The resulting conflicts aroused strong feelings in the community and culminated in the murders of 1850.

IN THE MEANTIME the Aga Khan himself had left Persia, where he had led an unsuccessful rising against the Shah, and after a short stay in Afghanistan he had taken refuge in India. His services to the British in Afghanistan and Sind gave him some claim to British gratitude. After staying first in Sind and then in Calcutta, he finally settled in Bombay, where he established himself as effective head of the Khoja community. There were still, however, some dissidents who opposed him, and who sought to use the machinery of the law to defeat his claims. After some preliminary actions, in April 1866 a group of seceders filed information and a bill in the High Court of Bombay, asking for an injunction restraining the Aga Khan "from interfering in the management of the trust property and affairs of the Khoja community."

The case was tried by the Chief Justice, Sir Joseph Arnould. The hearing lasted for twenty-five days, and involved almost the whole of the Bombay bar. Both sides brought elaborately argued and extensively documented cases, and the enquiries of the court ranged far and deep, in history and genealogy, theology and law. Among numerous witnesses, the Aga Khan himself testified before the court, and adduced evidence of his descent. On 12 November 1866 Sir Joseph Arnould delivered judgment. The Khojas of Bombay, he found, were part of the larger Khoja community of India, whose religion was that of the Ismaili wing of the Shi'a. They were "a sect of people whose ancestors were Hindu in origin; which was converted to and has throughout abided in the faith of the Shi'a Imamee Ismailis; which has always been and still is bound by ties of spiritual allegiance to the hereditary Imams of the Ismailis." They had been converted some four hundred years previously by an Ismaili missionary from Persia, and had remained subject to the spiritual authority of the line of Ismaili Imams, the latest of whom was the Aga Khan. These Imams were descended from the Lords of Alamut, and, through them, claimed descent from the Fatimid Caliphs of Egypt and, ultimately, from the Prophet Muhammad. Their followers, in mediaeval times, had become famous under the name of the Assassins.

The Arnould judgment, supported by a wealth of historical evidence and argument, thus legally established the status of the Khojas as a community of Ismailis, of the Ismailis as heirs of the Assassins, and of the Aga Khan as spiritual head of the Ismailis and heir of the Imams of Alamut. Detailed information about the community was provided for the first time in the *Gazeteer of the Bombay Presidency* in 1899.

THE ARNOULD JUDGMENT had also drawn attention to the existence of Ismaili communities in other parts of the world, some of which did not in fact recognise the Aga Khan as their chief. These communities were usually small minorities in remote and isolated places, difficult of access in every sense, and secretive to the point of death about their beliefs and their writings. Some of these writings, in manuscript, nevertheless found their way into the hands of scholars. At first these all came from Syria—the first area of Western interest in the Ismailis, in modern as in mediaeval times. Others followed, from widely separated regions. In 1903 an Italian merchant called Caprotti brought a collection of some sixty Arabic manuscripts from San'a, in the Yemen—the first of several batches which were deposited in the Ambrosiana library in Milan. On inspection, they were found to include several works on Ismaili doctrine, coming from among the Ismaili population still living in parts of Southern Arabia. Some of them contained passages written in secret cyphers. At the other end of Europe, Russian scholars, who had already received some Ismaili manuscripts from Syria, discovered that they had Ismailis within the frontiers of their own Empire, and in 1902 Count Alexis Bobrin-

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skoy published an account of the organisation and distribution of the Ismailis in Russian Central Asia.[2]

SINCE THEN, the progress of Ismaili studies has been rapid and remarkable. Many more Ismaili texts have become available, especially from the rich libraries of the sect in the Indian sub-continent, and much detailed research has been produced by scholars in many lands, including some who are themselves Ismailis. In one respect the recovery of the lost literature of the sect has been somewhat disappointing—in history. The books that have come to light are concerned almost exclusively with religion and related matters; works of an historical nature are both few in number and poor in content—perhaps inevitably in a minority community which possessed neither the territorial nor the institutional focus about which alone the mediaeval historian could conceive and write history. Only the principality of Alamut seems to have had its chronicles—and even these are preserved by Sunni, not Ismaili historians. But Ismaili literature, though poor in historical content, is by no means lacking in historical value. Its contribution to the narrative history of events is small—something on the Assassins of Persia, rather less on their brothers in Syria. It has, however, contributed immeasurably to the better understanding of the religious background of the movement, and has made possible a new appreciation of the beliefs and purposes, the religious and historical significance of the Ismailis in Islam, and of the Assassins as a branch of the Ismailis. The resulting picture of the Assassins differs radically both from the lurid rumours and fantasies brought back from the East by mediaeval travellers, and from the hostile and distorted image extracted by 19th-century orientalists from the manuscript writings of orthodox Muslim theologians and historians, whose main concern was to refute and condemn, not to understand or explain.

The Assassins no longer appear as a gang of drugged dupes led by scheming impostors, as a conspiracy of nihilistic terrorists, or as a syndicate of professional murderers. They are no less interesting for that.

THE ISMAILI ASSASSINS did not invent assassination; they merely lent it their name. Murder as such is as old as the human race; its antiquity is strikingly symbolised in the fourth chapter of Genesis, where the first murderer and the first victim appear as brothers, the children of the first man and woman. Political murder comes with the emergence of political authority—when power is vested in an individual, and the removal of that individual is seen as a quick and simple method of effecting political change. Usually the motive for such murders is personal, factional, or dynastic—the replacement of an individual, a party or a family by another in the possession of power. Such murders are commonplace in autocratic kingdoms and empires, in both East and West.

Sometimes the murder is conceived—by others as well as the murderer—as a duty, and is justified by ideological arguments. The victim is a tyrant or a usurper; to kill him is a virtue, not a crime. Such ideological justification may be expressed in political or in religious terms—in many societies there is little difference between the two. In ancient Athens two friends, Harmodius and Aristogeiton, conspired to kill the tyrant Hippias. They succeeded only in killing his brother and co-ruler, and were both put to death. After the fall of Hippias, they became public heroes in Athens, celebrated in statuary and song; their descendants enjoyed privileges and exemptions. This idealisation of tyrannicide became part of the political ethos of Greece and Rome, and found expression in such famous murders as those of Philip II of Macedon, Tiberius Gracchus, and Julius Caesar. The same ideal appears among the Jews, in such figures as Ehud and Jehu, and, most dramatically, in the story of the beautiful Judith, who made her way to the tent of the oppressor Holofernes, and cut off his head as he slept. The book of Judith was written during the period of Hellenistic domination, and survives only in a Greek version; the Jews, followed by the Protestants, reject it as apocryphal. It is, however, included in the canon of the Roman Catholic

[2] At about the same time a colonial official called A. Polovtsev acquired a copy of an Ismaili religious book, written in Persian; it was deposited in the Asiatic Museum of the Imperial Russian Academy of the Sciences. Another copy followed, and between 1914 and 1918 the Museum acquired a collection of Ismaili manuscripts, brought from Shughnan, on the upper Oxus river, by the orientalists I. I. Zarubin and A. A. Semyonov. With these, and other subsequently acquired manuscripts, Russian scholars were able to examine the religious literature and beliefs of the Ismailis of the Pamir and of the adjoining Afghan districts of Badakhshan.

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Church, and has inspired many Christian painters and sculptors. Though Judith has no place in Jewish religious tradition, the ideal of pious murder which she represents survived to inspire the famous Sicarii, or dagger-men—a group of zealots who appeared about the time of the fall of Jerusalem, and devoutly destroyed those who opposed or hindered them.

Regicide—both practical and idealistic—was familiar from the very beginnings of Islamic political history. Of the four Righteous Caliphs who followed the Prophet in the headship of the Islamic community, three were murdered. The second Caliph, Umar, was stabbed by a Christian slave with a private grievance; learning this, the Caliph on his death-bed thanked God that he had not been murdered by one of the faithful. Even this consolation was denied to his successors, Uthman and Ali, who were both struck down by Muslim Arabs—the first by a group of angry mutineers, the second by a religious fanatic. In both murders, the perpetrators saw themselves as tyrannicides, freeing the community from an unrighteous ruler —and both found others to agree with them.

The issues crystallised in the course of the Muslim civil war that followed Uthman's death. Mu'awiya, the governor of Syria and kinsman of the murdered Caliph, demanded the punishment of the regicides. Ali, who had succeeded as Caliph, was unable or unwilling to comply, and his supporters, to justify his inaction, claimed that no crime had been committed. Uthman had been an oppressor; his death was an execution, not a murder. The same argument was used by the extremist sect of the Kharijites to justify the murder of Ali himself a few years later.

To some extent, Islamic tradition gives recognition to the principle of justifiable revolt. While conceding autocratic powers to the sovereign, it lays down that the subject's duty of obedience lapses where the command is sinful, and that "there must be no obedience to a creature against his Creator." Since no procedure is laid down for testing the righteousness of a command, or for exercising the right to disobey one that is sinful, the only effective recourse for the conscientious subject is to rebel against the ruler, and to try to overrule or depose him by force. A more expeditious procedure is to remove him by assassination. This principle was often invoked, especially by sectarian rebels, to justify their acts.

In fact, after the death of Ali and accession of Mu'awiya, the murder of rulers becomes rare, and when it occurs is usually dynastic rather than revolutionary in inspiration. On the contrary, the Shi'a claimed that it was their Imams, and other members of the house of the Prophet, who were being murdered at the instigation of the Sunni Caliphs; their literature includes long lists of Alid martyrs, whose blood called for vengeance.

In sending their emissaries to kill the unrighteous and their minions, the Ismailis could thus invoke an old Islamic tradition. It was a tradition which was never dominant, and had for long been dormant, but which had its place, especially within the circle of the dissident and extremist sects.

The ancient ideal of tyrannicide, the religious obligation to rid the world of an unrighteous ruler, certainly contributed to the practice of assassination, as adopted and applied by the Ismailis. But there was more to it than that. The killing by the Assassin of his victim was not only an act of piety; it also had a ritual, almost a sacramental quality. It is significant that in all their murders, in both Persia and Syria, the Assassins always used a dagger; never poison, never missiles, though there must have been occasions when these would have been easier and safer. The Assassin is almost always caught, and usually indeed makes no attempt to escape. There is even a suggestion that to survive a mission was shameful. The words of a 12th-century Western author are revealing: "When therefore any of them have chosen to die in this way... he himself [*i.e.*, the Chief] hands them knives which are, so to speak, consecrated...."

Human sacrifice and ritual murder have no place in Islamic law, tradition, or practice. Yet both are ancient and deep-rooted in human societies, and can reappear in unexpected places. Just as the forgotten dance-cults of antiquity, in defiance of the austere worship of Islam, reappear in the ecstatic ritual of the dancing dervishes, so do the ancient cults of death find new expressions in Islamic terms. In the early 8th century, the Muslim authors tell us, a man called Abu Mansur al-Ijli, of Kufa, claimed to be the Imam, and taught that the prescriptions of the law had a symbolic meaning, and need not be obeyed in their literal sense. Heaven and Hell had no separate existence, but were merely

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the pleasures and misfortunes of this world. His followers practised murder as a religious duty. Similar doctrines—and practices—were ascribed to his contemporary and fellow-tribesman Mughira b. Sa'id. Both groups were suppressed by the authorities. It is significant that they were restricted, according to their beliefs, to a single weapon in their murderous rites. One group strangled their victims with nooses; another clubbed them with wooden cudgels. Only with the coming of the Mahdi would they be permitted to use steel. Both groups belonged to the extreme fringe of the extremist Shi'a. The parallel they offer to both the antinomianism and the weapon-cult of the later Ismailis is striking.

As custodians of esoteric mysteries for the initiate, as purveyors of salvation through knowledge of the Imam, as bearers of a promise of messianic fulfilment, of release from the toils of the world and the yoke of the law, the Ismailis are part of a long tradition, that goes back to the beginnings of Islam and far beyond, and forward to our own day—a tradition of popular and emotional cults in sharp contrast with the learned and legal religion of the established order.

THERE WERE MANY SUCH SECTS and groups before the Ismailis, but theirs was the first to create an effective and enduring organisation. It was a sign of the times. The earlier sodalities of the poor and powerless were scattered and insignificant, and rarely achieved the literary mention which alone could make them known to the historian. In the atomised and insecure society of the later Caliphate, men sought comfort and assurance in new and stronger forms of association; these became more numerous and more extensive, and reached from the lower to the middle and even the upper levels of the population—until finally the Caliph al-Nasir himself, by ceremonially joining one of them, tried to incorporate them in the apparatus of government.

These associations were of many kinds. Some were primarily regional, based on cities or quarters, with civic, police or even military functions. Some, in a society where crafts often coincided with local, ethnic, or religious groups, may also have acquired an economic role. Often they appear as associations of youths or young men, with ranks and rites to mark the attainment of adolescence and of manhood. Most were religious brotherhoods, the followers of holy men and of the cults established by them. Common features were the adoption of beliefs and practices belonging to popular religion and mistrusted by orthodoxy; a close bond of loyalty to comrades and devotion to leaders; a system of initiation and of hierarchic grades, supported by elaborate symbols and ceremonials. Most of these groups, though vaguely dissident, were politically inactive. The Ismailis, with their militant tactics and revolutionary aims, were able to use this form of organisation for a sustained attempt to overthrow and replace the existing order. At the same time, they gradually abandoned the philosophical refinements of their earlier doctrines, and adopted forms of religion that were closer to the beliefs current among the brotherhoods. In one respect, according to the Persian historians, the Ismailis adopted an almost monastic rule; the commandants of their castles, as long as they held office, had no women with them.

IN ONE RESPECT the Assassins are without precedent—in the planned, systematic and long-term use of terror as a political weapon. The stranglers of Iraq had been small-scale and random practitioners, rather like the thugs of India, with whom they may be connected. Previous political murders, however dramatic, were the work of individuals or at best of small groups of plotters, limited in both purpose and effect. In the skills of murder and conspiracy, the Assassins have countless predecessors; even in the refinement of murder as an art, a rite, and a duty, they have been anticipated or prefigured. But they may well be the first terrorists.

> "Brothers" [says an Ismaili poet], "when the time of triumph comes, with good fortune from both worlds as our companion, then by one single warrior on foot a king may be stricken with terror, though he own more than a hundred thousand horsemen."

It was true. For centuries the Shi'a had squandered their zeal and blood for their Imams, without avail. There had been countless risings, ranging from the self-immolation of small groups of ecstatics to carefully planned military operations. All but a few had failed, crushed by the armed forces of a state and an order that they were too weak to overthrow. Even the very few that succeeded brought no release for the pent-up emotion that they expressed. Instead, the victors, once invested with the panoply of authority and the custodianship of the Islamic

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community, turned against their own supporters and destroyed them.

Hasan-i Sabbah knew, when he launched the so-called New Preaching of Ismailism in the late 11th century, that his preaching could not prevail against the entrenched orthodoxy of Sunni Islam —that his followers could not meet and defeat the armed might of the Seljuq state. Others before him had vented their frustration in unplanned violence, in hopeless insurrection, or in sullen passivity. Hasan found a new way, by which a small force, disciplined and devoted, could strike effectively against an overwhelmingly superior enemy. "Terrorism," says a modern authority, "is carried on by a narrow limited organisation and is inspired by a sustained programme of large-scale objectives in the name of which terror is practised." This was the method that Hasan chose—the method, it may well be, that he invented.

"The Old Man of the Mountain," says Joinville, speaking of a later Ismaili chief in Syria, "paid tribute to the Templars and the Hospitallers, because they feared nothing from the Assassins, since the Old Man could gain nothing if he caused the Master of the Temple or of the Hospital to be killed; for he knew very well that if he had one killed, another just as good would replace him, and for this reason he did not wish to lose Assassins where he could gain nothing." The two orders of knighthood were integrated institutions, with an institutional structure, hierarchy and loyalty, which made them immune to attack by assassination; it was the absence of these qualities that made the atomised Islamic state, with centralised, autocratic power based on personal and transient loyalties, peculiarly vulnerable to it.

Hasan-i Sabbah showed political genius in perceiving this weakness of the Islamic monarchies. He also displayed remarkable administrative and strategic gifts in exploiting it by terrorist attack.

FOR SUCH A CAMPAIGN of sustained terror there were two obvious requirements—organisation and ideology. There had to be an organisation capable both of launching the attack and surviving the inevitable counter-blow; there had to be a system of belief—which in that time and place could only be a religion—to inspire and sustain the attackers to the point of death.

Both were found. The reformed Ismaili religion, with its memories of passion and martyrdom, its promise of divine and human fulfilment, was a cause that gave dignity and courage to those that embraced it, and inspired a devotion unsurpassed in human history. It was the loyalty of the Assassins, who risked and even courted death for their Master, that first attracted the attention of Europe, and made their name a by-word for faith and self-sacrifice before it became a synonym for murderer.

There was cool planning, as well as fanatical zeal, in the work of the Assassins. Several principles are discernible. The seizure of castles—some of them the former lairs of robber-chieftains—provided them with safe bases; the rule of secrecy—adapted from the old doctrine of *taqiyya*, religious dissimulation—helped both security and solidarity. The work of the terrorists was supported by both religious and political action. Ismaili missionaries found or gained sympathisers among the rural and urban population; Ismaili envoys called on highly-placed Muslims, whose fears or ambitions might make them temporary allies of the cause.

Such alliances raise an important general issue concerning the Assassins. Of several score murders recorded in Iran and Syria, a fair number are said by one or another source to have been instigated by third parties, often with an offer of money or other inducements. Sometimes the story is based on an alleged confession by the actual murderers, when caught and put to the question.

Clearly the Assassins, the devoted servants of a religious cause, were not mere cut-throats with daggers for hire. They had their own political objective, the establishment of the true Imamate, and neither they nor their leaders are likely to have been the tools of other men's ambitions. Yet the persistent and widespread stories of complicity, involving such names as the Seljuq Sultans Berkyaruq and Sanjar in the East, Saladin and Richard Coeur de Lion in the West, require some explanation.

SOME OF THESE STORIES were current because they were true. In many periods and places, there have been ambitious men who were willing to enlist the aid of violent extremists. They may not have shared or even liked their beliefs, but they thought they could use them, in the hope, usually misplaced, that they would be able to abandon those dangerous allies when they had served their purpose. Such was Ridwan of Aleppo, a Seljuq prince who did not scruple to switch from a Sunni to a Fatimid allegiance, and then to welcome the

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Assassins to his city, as a support against his kinsmen and his overlord. Such too were the scheming viziers in Isfahan and Damascus, who tried to use the power and terror of the Assassins for their own advancement. Sometimes the motive was terror rather than ambition—as for example with the pathetically frightened vizier of the Khorazmshah Jalal al-Din, described by Nasawi. Soldiers and sultans, as well as viziers, could be terrified into compliance, and several of the most dramatic stories that are told of Assassin skill and daring seem to have as their purpose to justify some tacit understanding between a pious Sunni monarch and the Ismaili revolutionaries.

The motives of men like Sanjar and Saladin are somewhat more complex. Both made their accommodations with the Assassins; neither is likely to have been swayed purely by personal fear or personal ambition. Both were engaged on great tasks—Sanjar on the restoration of the Seljuq Sultanate and the defence of Islam against heathen invaders from the East, Saladin on the renewal of Sunni unity and the ejection of Christian invaders from the West. Both must have realised the truth—that after their own deaths their kingdoms would crumble and their plans come to nothing. They may well have felt that a temporary concession to what was ultimately a less dangerous enemy was justified, in order to secure their personal safety, and with it the chance to complete their great work for the restoration and defence of Islam.

For the Assassins themselves, the calculation was much simpler. Their purpose was to disrupt and destroy the Sunni order; if some Sunni leaders could be tempted or terrorised into helping them, so much the better. Even in the days of their early fury, the Assassin leaders never disdained the help of others when it was forthcoming; later, when they became in effect territorial rulers, they fitted their policies with skill and ease into the complex mosaic of alliances and rivalries of the Muslim world.

ALL THIS DOES NOT MEAN that their services were for sale, or that every story of complicity, even those supported by confessions, was true. The leaders might make secret arrangements, but it is unlikely that they would inform the actual murderer of the details. What is much more probable is that the Assassin setting out on a mission was given what in modern parlance would be called a "cover story," implicating the likeliest character on the scene. This would have the additional advantage of sowing mistrust and suspicion in the opposing camp. The murders of the Caliph al-Mustarshid and the Crusader Conrad of Montferrat are good examples of this. The suspicion thrown on Sanjar in Persia and on Richard among the Crusaders must have served a useful purpose in confusing the issues and creating discord. In addition, we cannot be sure that every murder ascribed to or even claimed by the Assassins was in fact committed by them. Murder, for private or public reasons, was at least normally common, and the Assassins themselves must have provided "cover" for a number of unideological assassinations in which they had no part.

The Assassins chose their victims with care. Some Sunni authors have suggested that they waged indiscriminate war against the whole Muslim community.

> "It is well known and established" [says Hamdullah Mustawfi], "that the Batinis [*i.e.*, the Ismailis], may they get their just deserts, neglect no moment in injuring the Muslims in whatever way they can, and believe that they will receive rich reward and bounteous recompense for this. To commit no murder and to subdue no victim they regard as a great sin."

Hamdullah, writing in about 1330, presents a later view, contaminated by the myths and legends that were already current. The contemporary sources in both Persia and Syria suggest that the Ismaili terror was directed against specific persons, for specific purposes, and that apart from a few, quite exceptional outbreaks of mob violence, their relations with their Sunni neighbours were fairly normal. This seems to be true both of the Ismaili minorities in the towns, and of the Ismaili territorial rulers, in their dealings with their Sunni colleagues.

THE VICTIMS of the Assassins belong to two main groups; the first of princes, officers and ministers, the second of qadis and other religious dignitaries. An intermediate group between the two, the city prefects, also received occasional attention. With few exceptions, the victims were Sunni Muslims. The Assassins did not normally attack Twelver or other Shi'ites, nor did they turn their daggers against native Christians or Jews. There are few attacks even on the Crusaders in Syria, and most of them seem to follow the Ismaili agreements with Saladin and with the Caliph.

The enemy, for the Ismailis, was the Sunni establishment—political and military, bureau-

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cratic and religious. Their murders were designed to frighten, to weaken, and ultimately to overthrow it. Some were simply acts of vengeance and warning, such as the killing, in their own mosques, of Sunni divines who had spoken or acted against them. Other victims were chosen for more immediate and more specific reasons—such as the commanders of armies attacking the Ismailis, or the occupants of strongholds that they wished to acquire. Tactical and propagandist motives combine in the murder of major figures, such as the great vizier Nizam al-Mulk, two Caliphs, and the attempts on Saladin.

It is much more difficult to determine the nature of Ismaili support. Much of it must have come from the countryside. The Ismailis had their main bases in castles; they were most successful when they could rely on the population of the surrounding villages for support and also for recruitment. In both Persia and Syria the Ismaili emissaries tried to establish themselves in areas where there were old traditions of religious deviation. Such traditions are remarkably persistent, and have survived, in some of these areas, to the present day. Some of the religious writings of the New Preaching, in contrast with the sophisticated urban intellectualism of earlier Ismaili theology, show many of the magical qualities associated with peasant religion.

Ismaili support could be most effectively mobilised and directed in rural and mountain areas. It was not, however, limited to such areas. Clearly, the Ismailis also had their own followers in the towns, where they gave discreet help when needed to the men from the castles proceeding on their missions. Sometimes, as in Isfahan and Damascus, they were strong enough to come out into the open in the struggle for power.

It has usually been assumed that the urban supporters of Ismailism were drawn from the lower orders of society—the artisans, and below them the floating, restless rabble. This assumption is based on the occasional references to Ismaili activists of such social origin, and to the general lack of evidence on Ismaili sympathies among the better-off classes, even those that were at some disadvantage in the Seljuq Sunni order. There are many signs of Shi'ite sympathies among the merchants and *literati*, for example—but they seem to have preferred the passive dissent of the Twelvers to the radical subversion of the Ismailis.

Inevitably, many of the leaders and teachers of the Ismailis were educated townsmen. Hasan-i Sabbah was from Rayy, and received a scribal education; Ibn Attash was a physician, as was the first emissary of Alamut in Syria. Sinan was a schoolmaster, and, according to his own statement, the son of a family of notables in Basra. Yet the New Preaching never seems to have had the seductive intellectual appeal that had tempted poets, philosophers, and theologians in earlier times. From the 9th to the 11th centuries Ismailism, in its various forms, had been a major intellectual force in Islam, a serious contender for the minds as well as the hearts of the believers, and had even gained the sympathy of such a towering intellect as the philosopher and scientist Avicenna (980–1037). In the 12th and 13th centuries this is palpably no longer true. After Nasir-i Khusraw, who died some time after 1087, there is no major intellectual figure in Ismaili theology, and even his followers were limited to peasants and mountaineers in remote places. Under Hasan-i Sabbah and his successors, the Ismailis pose terrible political, military and social problems to Sunni Islam, but they no longer offer an intellectual challenge.

More and more, their religion acquires the magical and emotional qualities, the redemptionist and millenarian hopes, associated with the cults of the dispossessed, the disprivileged and the unstable. Ismaili theology had ceased to be, and did not again become, a serious alternative to the new orthodoxy that was dominating the intellectual life of the Muslim cities—though Ismaili spiritual concepts and attitudes continued, in a disguised and indirect form, to influence Persian and Turkish mysticism and poetry, and elements of Ismailism may be discerned in such later outbreaks of revolutionary messianism as the Dervish revolt in 15th-century Turkey and the Babi upheaval in 19th-century Persia.

There is one more question that the modern historian is impelled to ask—what does it mean? In religious terms, the New Preaching of the Ismailis can be seen as a resurgence of certain millenarian and antinomian trends, which are recurrent in Islam and which have parallels—and perhaps antecedents—in other religious traditions. But when modern man ceased to accord first place to religion in

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his own concerns, he also ceased to believe that other men, in other times, could ever truly have done so, and so he began to re-examine the great religious movements of the past in search of interests and motives acceptable to modern minds.

The first great theory on the "real" significance of Muslim heresy was launched by the Count de Gobineau, the father of modern racialism. For him, Shi'ism represented a reaction of the Indo-European Persians against Arab domination—against the constricting Semitism of Arab Islam. To 19th-century Europe, obsessed with the problems of national conflict and national freedom, such an explanation seemed reasonable and indeed obvious. The Shi'a stood for Persia, fighting first against Arab and later against Turkish domination. The Assassins represented a form of militant, nationalist extremism, like the terrorist secret societies of 19th-century Italy and Macedonia.

The advance of scholarship on the one hand, and changes in European circumstances on the other, led in the 20th century to some modifications in this theory of racial or national conflict. Increased knowledge showed that Shi'ism in general, and Ismailism in particular, were by no means exclusively Persian. The sect had begun in Iraq; the Fatimid caliphate had achieved its major successes in Arabia, in North Africa and in Egypt—and even the reformed Ismailism of Hasan-i Sabbah, though launched in Persia and by Persians, had won an extensive following in Arab Syria and had even percolated among the Turcoman tribes that had migrated into the Middle East from Central Asia. And in any case, nationality was no longer regarded as a sufficient base for great historical movements.

In a series of studies the first of which appeared in 1911, a Russian scholar, V. V. Barthold, offered another explanation. In his view, the real meaning of the Assassin movement was a war of the castle against the cities—a last and ultimately unsuccessful attempt by the rural Iranian aristocracy to resist the new, urban social order of Islam. Pre-Islamic Persia had been a knightly society, to which the city had come as an Islamic innovation. Like the barons—and robber-barons—of mediaeval Europe, the Persian land-owning knights, with the support of the village population, waged war from their castles against this alien and encroaching new order. The Assassins were a weapon in this war.

Later Russian scholars revised and refined Barthold's attempt at an economic explanation of Ismailism. The Ismailis were not against the towns as such, in which they had their own supporters, but against certain dominant elements in the towns—the rulers and the military and civil notables, the new feudal lords and the officially favoured divines. Moreover, the Ismailis could not simply be equated with the old nobility. They did not inherit their castles, but seized them, and their support came not so much from those who still owned their estates, as from those who had lost them to new owners —to the tax-farmers, officials and officers who had received grants of land and revenues from the new rulers at the expense of the gentry and peasantry.

One view sees Ismailism as a reactionary ideology, devised by the great feudal magnates to defend their privileges against the equalitarianism of Sunni Islam; another as a response, varied according to circumstances, to the needs of the different groups which had suffered from the imposition of the Seljuq new order, and thus embracing both the deposed old ruling class and the discontented populace of the cities; yet another simply as a "popular" movement based on the artisans, the city poor, and the peasantry of mountain regions. According to this view, Hasan's proclamation of the Resurrection was a victory of the "popular" forces; his threats of punishment against those who still observed the Holy Law were directed against feudal elements in the Ismaili possessions, who were secretly faithful to Islamic orthodoxy and hostile to social equality.

Like the earlier attempts at an ethnic explanation, these theories of economic determination have enriched our knowledge of Ismailism, by directing research into new and profitable directions. Like earlier theologies, they have suffered from excessive dogmatism, which has stressed some aspects and neglected others—in particular the sociology of religion, of leadership, and of association. It is obvious that some extension of our knowledge of Islam and its sects, some refinement of our methods of enquiry, are needed before we can decide how significant was the economic element in Ismailism, and what precisely it was. In the meantime both the experience of events and the advance of scholarship in our own time may suggest that it is not so easy to disentangle national from economic factors, or either from psychic and social determinants, and that the distinction, so important to our immediate predecessors, between the radical right and the radical left may sometimes prove illusory.

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No single, simple explanation can suffice to clarify the complex phenomenon of Ismailism, in the complex society of mediaeval Islam. The Ismaili religion evolved over a long period and a wide area, and meant different things at different times and places. The Ismaili states were territorial principalities, with their own internal differences and conflicts; the social and economic order of the Islamic Empire, as of other mediaeval societies, was an intricate and changing pattern of different élites, estates, and classes, of social, ethnic and religious groups—and neither the religion nor the society in which it appeared has yet been adequately explored.

Like other great historic creeds and movements, Ismailism drew on many sources, and served many needs. For some, it was a means of striking at a hated domination, whether to restore an old order or to create a new one; for others, the only way of achieving God's purpose on earth. For different rulers, it was a device to secure and maintain local independence against alien interference, or a road to the Empire of the world; a passion and a fulfilment, that brought dignity and meaning to drab and bitter lives, or a gospel of release and destruction; a return to ancestral truths—and a promise of future illumination.

Concerning the place of the Assassins in the history of Islam, four things may be said with reasonable assurance.

The first is that their movement, whatever its driving force may have been, was regarded as a profound threat to the existing order, political, social and religious. The second is that they are no isolated phenomenon, but one of a long series of messianic movements, at once popular and obscure, impelled by deep-rooted anxieties, and from time to time exploding in outbreaks of revolutionary violence. The third is that Hasan-i Sabbah and his followers succeeded in re-shaping and re-directing the vague desires, wild beliefs, and aimless rage of the discontented into an ideology and an organisation which, in cohesion, discipline and purposive violence, have no parallel in earlier or in later times.

The fourth, and perhaps ultimately the most significant point, is their final and total failure. They did not overthrow the existing order; they did not even succeed in holding a single city of any size. Even their castle domains became no more than petty principalities, which in time were overwhelmed by conquest, and their followers have become small and peaceful communities of peasants and merchants—one sectarian minority among many.

Yet the undercurrent of messianic hope and revolutionary violence which had impelled them flowed on, and their ideals and methods found many imitators. For these, the great changes of our time have provided new causes for anger, new dreams of fulfilment, and new tools of attack.

The Assassination of the Nizam al-Mulk. (*From a Persian manuscript of the* Jami al-tavarikh *of Rashid al-Din, in the library of the Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul. Early 14th century.*)

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Column

THE Greek *chiloi* means a thousand, and hence we have *chiliasm, chiliast, chiliastic*, all deriving from the belief that a thousand-year cycle has a special significance in human history; its close may presage the end of the world, the Second Coming, the establishment of the Kingdom of God, or, as in *The Republic*, the return to earth of the souls of the departed after a millennium in the underworld.

What do we ourselves expect of the year 2000, now only thirty-three years away? Curiously enough, for the first time in history the objective conditions exist which could transform what was once a matter of superstitition into a reality; the end of the world may really be at hand. But even if this is averted, the rate of scientific and technological change is by now so great that it is certain that thirty-three years hence the world will be in many respects so transformed as to be unrecognisable.

This prospect is both alarming and exhilarating; but it also creates so many problems in every sphere of life that by now serious attempts are being made to predict the future in the hope that, with foreknowledge, the pressure of change may be made more tolerable. In Paris, there is the project called *Futuribles* directed by Bertrand de Jouvenel, and in Britain the Committee on the Next Thirty Years set up by the English Social Science Research Council. In the United States, the American Academy has established a Commission on the Year 2000, under Professor Daniel Bell, and has now devoted the whole of the summer issue of its journal, *Daedalus*, to publishing its proceedings during its first year of work.

Of course, the business of prediction, as the Commission recognises, has its own built-in logical gimmick; if we can foresee the future and don't like what we see, why shouldn't we make it otherwise? But this also provides the justification for the hazardous task of prediction. If we are really in a position to define, however tentatively, the shape of things to come, then we can and should take immediate steps to control or modify its ugliest features; and if this is not done now it may soon be too late.

This becomes evident in the case of one of the predictions which the Commission makes with some confidence; the rapid increase in urbanisation, combined with growth of population, in the advanced industrial, or rather "post-industrial," countries. By the year 2000, in the United States, a minimum of 280 million people, or over 80% of the population, will live in urban areas, and of these a half will be concentrated in three giant megalopolises, here christened Boswash, Chipitts, and Sansan. Boswash will stretch continuously from Washington to Boston and contain nearly 80 million people, about a quarter of the American population; Chipitts, with 40 millions, from Chicago to Pittsburgh and north to Canada; Sansan, 20 millions, from Santa Barbara, or even San Francisco, to San Diego. In Britain, the whole of south-east England will form another megalopolis, and in Japan the Tokyo–Osaka strip. But these urban giants, or monsters, will have few of what we have hitherto considered the amenities of life in a city, from which the word "urbane" derives its agreeable associations. In the American megalopolis, for instance, if present tendencies continue, racial segregation would be stricter than ever. The central cities would belong to the coloured races, with a white minority consisting exclusively of the poor and deprived; the surrounding suburban areas would be white. Some of the cities would have become "ungovernable," and the gap, in wealth, in education, in technical skills, between them and the rich suburbs would be greater than ever.

BUT THERE ARE other features of the year 2000 which some at least may find even more disagreeable. The Commission, quite rightly, does not overrate (as Marshall McLuhan so often does) the effects of the purely technical innovations which will appear more and more rapidly during the next thirty years; it would not in fact greatly affect the quality of our lives if the Hovercraft were to displace the highway and the wheel. But what would be the effect if, as the Commission suggests, in the year 2000 the scarcest, most expensive, almost unobtainable luxury will be human privacy? The citizen of the year 2000 will be under constant surveillance, by long-distance photography, concealed microphones, closed-circuit television, tapped telephone lines, and other electronic instruments, and technology will have made these devices available not merely to governments but to private agencies and individuals, from large corporations with a commercial interest in the private lives of their employees to insurance companies anxious about the health of their clients and estranged wives and husbands seeking grounds for divorce. "Thus, by 2000, man's technical inventiveness may, in terms of privacy, have turned the whole community into the equivalent of an army barracks."

Moreover, and this will be one of its aspects which will most differentiate the year 2000 from any other, it will be possible for all of the information derived by such means to be recorded,

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centrally stored, analysed, cross-referenced and made easily and immediately available to anyone who may be interested, in whatever form best suits their purpose. The individual will be all the more exposed to such forms of intrusion, and others will find it all the easier to exploit them, because of the continued and rapid decline of three of the institutions with which men have in the past defended the private life; the decline of the family, the decline of religion, and the decline in the habit of reading.

IT IS EASY, of course, to make one's flesh creep with nightmares of this kind, and no doubt society may be able to find antidotes for them. One, perhaps, may be found in education, and all the more so because, in the year 2000, education will certainly play an even greater part in our culture and our society than it does today. For the technological structure on which they will depend will demand an ever-increasing supply of the only people capable of understanding, managing and directing it; for anyone else it will have very little use. Yet all the signs are that, in the year 2000, the educational system, higher and lower, will be so closely geared to the needs of the structure that it may well have ceased to bear any resemblance to anything we have called education until now and to serve purposes quite other than any we have hitherto associated with it.

At the very least, what we must expect is an immense and rapid change in educational methods and techniques, whatever higher purpose they may serve, if any; for the demands of the technological structure will be urgent and imperative, and will only be satisfied by continuous changes in educational method corresponding to the continuous change within the structure itself. The school, the university, will be less like what we have hitherto thought of as educational institutions than factories, or laboratories, their activities controlled by immense computerised information seeking-recording-distributing centres, the end result a properly balanced supply of the technocratic managers (including university professors) required for the successful working of the system.

> Imagine a classroom partitioned into semi-insulated booths. In each booth are a pair of head-phones, a typewriter keyboard, a screen similar to a television set, and a photo-sensitive light gun. All these stations (and others in other classrooms) are in communication with a central computer. A student communicates with the computer by typing on the keyboard or by touching his light gun to designated spots on the screen; the computer communicates with the student by playing recorded speech through the student's earphones, or by writing or drawing pictures on the cathode ray tube. Each student can be working on a different lesson, or two on the same lesson can progress at different rates. A teacher walks from booth to booth, answers questions, sees that the stations are operating properly, and supervises requests for new materials. . . .

Is this the school of the future? Not at all; it is a description of the system now actually operating in a school at Palo Alto, California, but it may provide a primitive model of the school of the year 2000. And in this respect it provides a model of much that is most valuable and stimulating in the Commission's proceedings. For while the Commission is discussing and analysing the world in the year 2000, it is in fact merely projecting particular features of the world as it is today. The year 2000 is thirty-three years away; but it is also with us here and now.

*

I FIRST BECAME interested in B. Traven, when long ago in Berlin I was given a German copy of *The Death Ship*. Thereafter I read *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* and *The Rebellion of the Hanged* and in each case was struck by Traven's ability to translate Marxist dialectic into fiction, in such a way that one could not help admiring the fiction even if one disagreed with the dialectic. He seemed and still seems to me an admirable writer who even today has not received the critical recognition and appreciation which he deserves; on the other hand, Traven's twelve novels have appeared in more than 500 editions in 36 languages, and have sold in millions of copies, and perhaps this is all the recognition he would require.

Perhaps also Traven himself is partly to blame if he has escaped literary attention, for he has concealed himself behind such an elaborate web of silence, secrecy, and mystery that at times it is almost impossible to believe that he has any identity at all. As I myself learned when I first tried to make inquiries about him, origins, age, nationality, whereabouts were equally unknown, and whether Traven was his real name, and what if anything the initial B. stood for.

But now the mystery, or at least part of the mystery, is revealed in what I have found a fascinating article in the September issue of the American magazine, *Ramparts*, which has a good eye for mysteries, sometimes even when they do not exist. Its author, Miss Judy Stone, has spent a year investigating Traven's life, and has run him to earth at last, both physically, in the present, and biographically, in the past. The story she has to tell is both highly revealing, if provokingly incomplete, in regard to Traven himself, and also throws some valuable light on some extremely obscure corners of history.

Traven does exist and lives in Mexico, "a

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deaf old man on a sunlit patio in Mexico City, clinging stubbornly to his secrets." But he is also, according to Miss Stone, the following people:

(1) Ret Marut, actor and editor, registered as an alien by the Düsseldorf police in 1912. Birthplace, San Francisco, on 25 February 1882. Nationality: English, later mysteriously changed to American.

(2) Richard Maurhut, German novelist.

(3) Berick Traven Torsvan, who said he was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 5 March 1890, now a citizen of Mexico under that name.

(4) Hal Croves, Traven's agent and scriptwriter.

Who was Ret Marut, the first and improbably named of these identities? In 1912 he registered in Düsseldorf as an alien and an Englishman; on 1 August 1914, the day of German mobilisation, the records were, inexplicably, changed to make him an American, so that on the outbreak of war he was a neutral. In 1917 he appeared in Munich, where he immediately began to publish a violently anti-nationalist and anti-militarist magazine, *Der Ziegelbrenner* (The Brick Burner).

On 17 November 1918, when every institution in Germany had collapsed, Kurt Eisner in Munich proclaimed a Bavarian Socialist Republic. On 21 February 1919, Eisner was assassinated by Count Arco-Valley, half-Jew and half-mad. In the first Soviet Republic established in Munich after Eisner's death, Traven/Marut became a member of the "Preparatory Committee to Establish a Revolutionary Tribunal" and of the committee responsible for the censorship of bourgeois newspapers. On 1 May 1919, Munich's second Soviet Republic was suppressed by the Bavarian *Freikorps* and regular troops dispatched from Berlin. It was not merely suppressed; it was drowned in blood. Marut was arrested and brought before a summary court martial. The warrant for his arrest listed his parents as dead; his father was given as Wilhelm Marut and his mother as Helene Ottarent. None of these facts can be verified because the San Francisco city records were destroyed in the great fire and earthquake of 1906.

Marut dramatically, and almost miraculously, escaped from arrest, and thereafter he disappears from Miss Stone's story, as mysterious a figure as Traven himself. But there are reasons for believing that the obscurity of his birth conceals an august, indeed an imperial, parentage. In the radical, rabidly anti-militarist and anti-establishment *Der Ziegelbrenner*, Marut went out of his way to defend the Emperor William II, praising "the politeness and good humour that come out of the warm heart of an emperor," and the emperor's "good taste in theatre questions [which] is well known."

What explains this curious piece of flattery, so incongruous in the pages of *Der Ziegelbrenner*, as if the *Morning Star* suddenly praised Prince Philip for his deep humanity? And what indeed explains the freedom permitted to an anti-militarist paper edited by an alien in Munich in the middle of the war? Miss Stone finds the answer in the rumours that Marut was the illegitimate son of the Kaiser, and enjoyed imperial protection. The rumours have some foundation. Recently, the German magazine *Stern* published a story that Traven's wife had stated that Traven believed himself to be the son of the Kaiser; she later denied this. *Stern* also published photographs of the Kaiser, two of his legitimate children, and Traven, showing what appears to be a remarkable likeness, the same unmistakable Hohenzollern profile that used to produce such enthusiasm in the Junker friends of my youth. When *Stern* asked Prince Louis Ferdinand, the present head of the House of Hohenzollern, about Traven, he dismissed the matter loftily: "I consider the whole matter closed."

Thus the mystery of B. Traven is revealed only to disclose more mysteries. Miss Stone does not give us enough information to judge whether the identification of Traven with Marut is authentic, but she is able to trace surprisingly close parallels between the pages of *Der Ziegelbrenner* and the novels of B. Traven. A German scholar has devoted ten years to the same task. Can we also then accept the further hypothesis that Traven is the son of the Kaiser, the half-brother of Little Willy (and also perhaps of Harry Graf Kessler)?; and if so, what genetic mutation would explain this late flowering of literary talent in the Hohenzollerns?

Perhaps the best answer to such questions is Traven's reply to Miss Stone: "Forget the man! What does it matter whether he is the son of a Hohenzollern prince or anyone else?" Perhaps one should add to it the conversation between the police officer and the sailor without a passport, in *The Death Ship*. "You ought to have some papers to show who you are," said the policeman. "I don't need any papers," said the sailor. "I know who I am."

An account of Miss Stone's conversations with Traven (alias Hal Croves) is still to come. I for one look forward to it with the keenest anticipation. I hope also that it, and her article, may inspire some enterprising publisher to give us a complete edition of Traven's novels (many of which are unobtainable in English), together with a bibliography and whatever biographical material is now available. It would be a considerable contribution to the history of our times.

R

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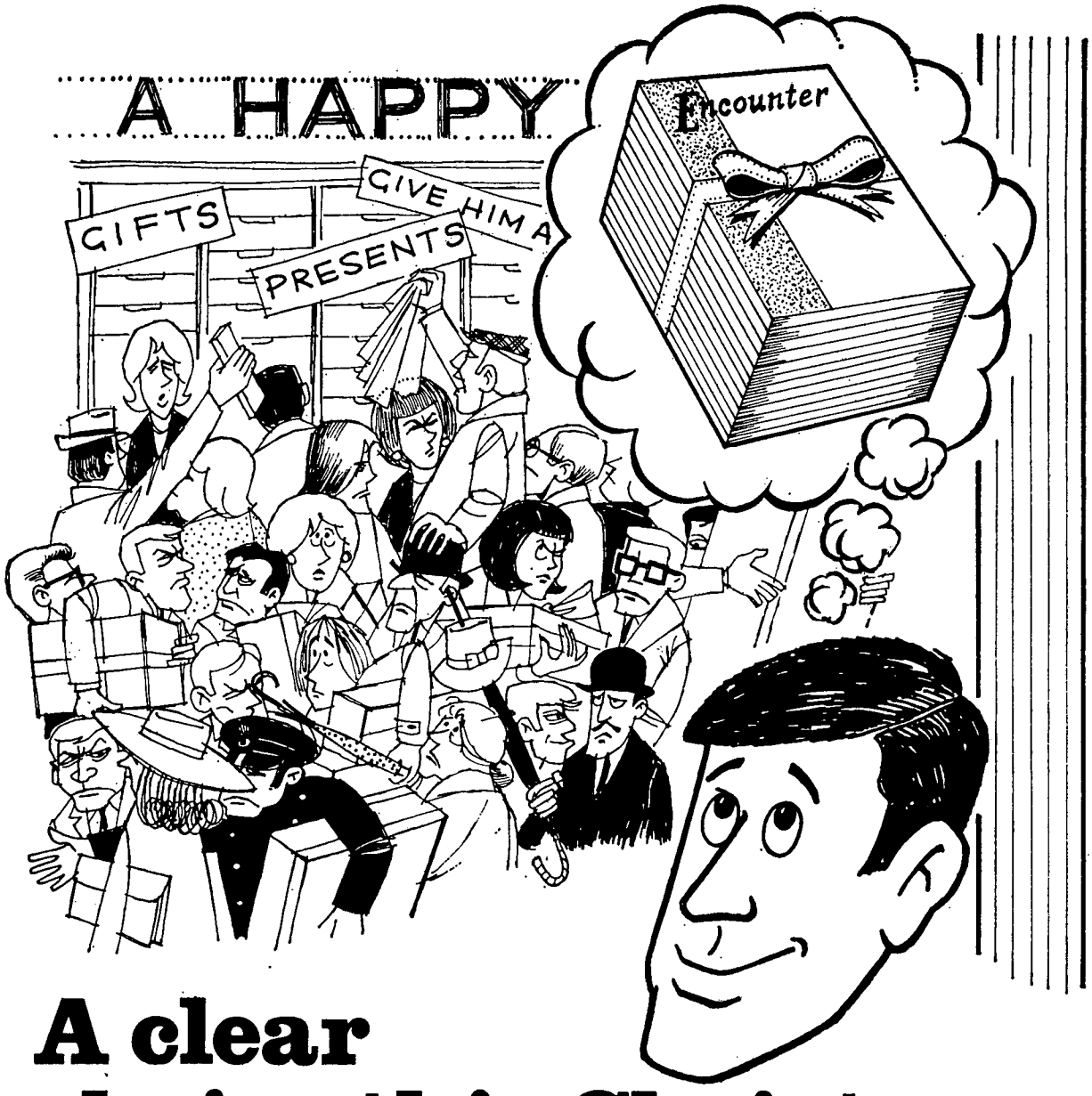

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Life & Letters Today

Glasgow

ALDERMAN *Langton's statement that "The Scots are more tolerant than the English towards coloured immigrants, because they are immigrants themselves" is astounding. We have a song in Scotland "The Hun go Home," meaning the English go back to Germany.*

THE GUARDIAN

London

THE TROUBLE WITH *Communist propaganda is that even Communists can't understand it—a shaming discovery which seems to be pushing Czechoslovakia at least into looking afresh at the whole dismal business of party evasions and party jargon. Newspaper circulations are dropping; the verbal seeds of revolution fall on rocky ground. And comrade Vladimir Vondra, blasting forth directly on Prague Radio, knows why: nobody in authority writes good prose any longer.*

The party press rules, as applied, would seem to be: "Reduce verbs to the barest minimum and use them chiefly in the passive voice to ensure complete anonymity for the originator of the action." Thus you say "the plan was not fulfilled." There's the reflexive verb form—"difficulties have made themselves felt"; and the good old intransitive verb form—"hay-making lags behind."

You also, of course, use as many words as possible. Whereas Shakespeare's Romeo said: "I dreamt a strange dream last night," the Czech press rendition would be: "In the period just past, which was devoted to revived development of activity, visual, subjective images of a deceitful nature appeared."

Vondra seems very pleased with his little translation; indeed, he thinks—with seriousness and satire intermingled—state schools should start revising all classics in Marxist jargon so that kids can understand the party's message when they grow up. THE GUARDIAN

Edinburgh

A REMINDER *that Celtic Studies contributed "little or nothing to the great modern god productivity," was given by the Lord Advocate of Scotland, when he opened the international congress of Celtic Studies at the David Hume Tower, Edinburgh University, today.* THE TIMES

Newark

MOST OF THE GROUP *of young women who were looting the supermarket at Springfield Avenue and Morris Street in leisurely fashion today left their shopping bags and carts and ran outside when someone yelled that the National Guardsmen were coming. One, who did not run, called to the others from behind an empty bread shelf: "Do you see any soul brothers among them?"*

The other women watched the guardsmen moving slowly along Springfield Avenue in jeeps and trucks and observed that each of the youthful civilian soldiers was white. "Not one blood among the whole group," one woman on the sidewalk said. She led the group back into the store through a wide opening where a plate-glass window had been. "They ain't letting the brother into anything."

The woman behind the bread shelf told the others: "The brother's got to take everything he gets. Whitey ain't about to get up off of anything unless you make him."

A youngster helping to fix an old car along Belmont Street lustily condemned the rioters for "messing up their own neighborhoods," until he was told that rioters were suspected of starting a major fire in the business district of Newark. The youth was elated. "Now that's more like it, you have got to put a hurting on whitey," he said.

At City Hall someone observed: "These kids cannot articulate it. . . ." NEW YORK TIMES

Saigon

IF THERE IS *any compensation for being an American serviceman stationed in Viet Nam, it is apparently the "Saigon Daily News," which contains so many hilarious misprints that it is a pleasure to read.*

The editors confessed in their anniversary issue: "Although it is a newspaper's primary purpose to inform, errors that creep in daily have kept enough people entertained to attract some readers that otherwise would have given up in disgust."

They were referring to such things as the Soccer team that "got a gal in each half," and a bar which advertises a reasonable welcome and warm prices and "peasant hostesses."

Or there was the description of how alert Customs police "seized 120 cases of whiskey, most of it wine." Pin-up enthusiasts treasure the picture of an actress with a caption asserting that she is "one of the most solicited starlets in Hollywood today." DAILY TELEGRAPH

Washington

LINGUISTIC RESEARCH *that used to take a lifetime can now be done by computers in just a few weeks. But the National Research Council said machines still could not replace humans in the translation of foreign languages. The Council's Automatic Language Processing Advisory Committee, after a two-year study, recommended $3 million a year for computer research in linguistics because of its promise in language studies. The average human translator, however, was a bargain in comparison with the cost of machine translation.*

The report cited an example of computer translation of physics material that resulted in a product 10 per cent less accurate, 21 per cent slower, and 29 per cent harder to understand than the same material translated by a human.

HERALD TRIBUNE

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Giuseppe Giusti

The Ball

(Il Ballo, 1841)

Part I

Raddled *Chilosca*,
The Gothic beauty,
Has sent out invites
To a swank party;

To an "At Home" in
The mansion she rents
From Farinata's
Abased descendants.

Magic lantern slides
Seem to play on the wall,
Painting goblins and fiends
Showing up for the ball.

In fantastic fresco,
See the antic dancer
Who skips to the tambour
Of the circus barker!

The horde swells, 'til
The court's a rout;
Hundreds, each out
To sport his snout:

Barons, Princes,
Dukes, Excellencies,
All bows and scrapes and
Reverences.

The flunkey's eyes
Assess each chest,
To what's pinned there
His yells attest.

Among so many handles
How ill-fitted *my* name!
How hard it jangles
On the ear—the same

As in a music
Solemn as can be,
When cornet or oboe
Is chirping off key.

With an Olympian
Nod of her crest,
The crusty, dumpy
Goddess of the feast

Becks and blesses
From her divan,
Into the mincer presses
Woman and man.

In clipped, laryngent
Vacuous accent,
Paid is the toll of
Compliment.

Off down the corridor
Squeeze the *bon ton*,
Buffeted, muttering:
"*Pardon, pardon*!"

Oh, hallowed rafters,
Portraits and busts!
Attuned to the argot
Of Tuscan dust;

If centuries of it
Fair gave you the pip,
May the pidgin of—*lodgers*
Come as a fillip!

Oh, stomach the breath
Of a rude villein,
Who has no more wit than
To talk Italian.

Backing and tacking,
Inching onwards *en bloc*,
Craning as from a crow's-nest
O'er chignons and curlilocks,

I reach a sort of room
Like a steaming copper,
Giving off a hum
Of rotting matter.

Here, seemingly moved
By occult forces,
A wooden congress
Creaks and prances.

German puppets
Togged-up in state,
Like birds wrapped
In a fowler's net:

Their leaps as stiff,
As taut, as harsh,
As spooks and skeletons
Dipped in starch.

No happy faces, no
Robustiousness;
Only a most elegant
Disgustedness.

Their spirits stoppered,
They open their pores
To the vapid thrills
Of tepid amours.

Their furred tongues
Of costive pride
Make endless blague,
But nought beside.

But of round and dance
They'll have no more:
It's a bore; and so,
To t'other floor

Ladies and gents all pour:
In furious disorder,
They swoop like rustlers
On vittles, bottles, butlers.

What barking and ordering!
What roaring and pouring!
What bending of elbows!
What shoving and clawing!

A vortex of swinjers,
Of snatching fingers;
Platters like mangers;
Titanic trenchers.

The belly's not asked
To stomach the lot of it,
Much of the spread goes
Home in the pocket;

And in the junket
Of joy unreserved,
A number of spoons
Creep off unobserved.

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* An introductory note on Giusti (1809 - 1859) by Nigel Dennis was published in September ENCOUNTER, with a first selection of Mr. Dennis' translation.

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Part II

There, amid flaccid
Daughters-in-law, and
Amid their re-painted
Mothers-in-law;

'Midst diplomatists
In swallow-tails and braid,
As a-dangle with gewgaws
As a pedlars' parade,

I spot a posse
Of lower station,
Another specie,
Wholly plebeian.

Yes, I, who's guilty
Of a one-track fantasy,
Chasing like crazy
My love for democracy,

Am shaping a grin
At seeing such cullies
Picking their noses in
The Holy of Holies

And am heading their way
When I go all queasy,
Appalled to recognise
Four obscenities.

No. 1's the person of
A once-would-be friar,
Who now, for the hell of it,
Calls himself "The Prior,"

But has neither cassock
Nor clerical halter,
Bows more to the sauceboat
Than to the altar.

Beloved of the gourmand,
At grub, a dab hand,
He's feared but courted for
Cuisine of another brand.

He cooks-up the gossip,
He concocts the chitchat,
He decants the vices
Of this person and that.

He runs things down,
To pick 'em up cheap,
Then plays 'em up,
To sell at peak.

He's a hit at whist
With brides and daughters,
He makes monkeys of
Meddlesome mothers

And cuckolds of hubbies
Shrunk by years and paralysis;
Caught cheating, he chuckles
And bilks on his losses.

No. 2's blood turned blue
At his recent knighting
By a Christian King-of-kings,
By which I mean, ban-King.

He'd bribed his way round
Both judge and priest,
Been set free to compound
Loans at high interest:

Now, scorning the pennies
Of the Florentine mob, he's
Got his screws on the thumbs
Of the proper nobs.

He flies his knight's banner
At their palace gates,
Enticing like a trapper
The insolvent inmates.

Like the putrescence
That slowly invests
The body in which it's
Become the guest,

But, sucking virility
From the host's debility,
Shares eventually the
Prey's infirmity;

Just so, the mouldy
Patrician—he,
Of ribs once peerless
But now shirtless—

Infects his eater
With his own hauteur,
Makes proud the creditor
By being his debtor.

And so, life returns to
Dead courts and palaces
As the knighted loan-shark's
Enfeoffed residences.

The illustrious ones
Detest him silently,
Pay homage and loathing
Simultaneously.

But he ignores equally
Hatred and dignity; he
Asks the kisses of the debtor
To play cat-and-mouse the better.

No. 3 will tell you he's
On the run—like a good book
Hot off the press, but one
That the printer never took

To attend the dinner
At which priest and censor
Chew-over what titbits
They'll cut out and devour.

Wounded at Rimini, he
Escaped capture and
Running for sanctuary
(Or so runs his *story*!)

Went homeless and hungry.
He says he dreams nightly
Of rope and drop: *I* fancy he
Sleeps like a top.

Oh, honourable sons
Of this our nation, sons
Of a century that
Decoys stupidity—oh, you

Magnanimous heroes,
Be alert for the cheat
Who feigns fear of the gallows
To elicit secrets.

Like classic Alcibiades
Of ever-changing norm,
This roving informer
Exists in proteform.

His disguise takes the style
That will be noticed least:
In London, he's an exile;
In Rome, a priest.

Among Royalists, he's a souse,
Raising his glass and crying:
"Friends! Here's a health to the
King!"
But when he comes to *my* house,

It's *O Italia mia*! he
Croons with a sigh;
For the songs of the free
Make the tunes of the spy.

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Part III

What horror struck at
Me, as I made inspection
Of shameless *No.* 4.—that
Loathsome infection!

All powdered and painted
To pass for a chicken,
But toothless and two-faced,
"At Home" in the midden.

The modern way's to play
Awfully bored with dead
Titans, but for any Tom
Thumb of today, to go way

Overboard. From the riffraff,
You pick a palpable dwarf
And inflate on his behalf
A puff called "an epigraph."

So, who will suspect me
Of staging a farce,
If I choose *No. 4* to be
My horse's arse?

Donkeys' years old,
Once rich, well-bred,
He got bored to death
By not being dead. So

He looked for distraction
In foreign lands; soon, he
Was top chameleon of
The pilgrim band. But he

Blued so much abroad that
When he had to come back,
All but his social rank
Had been lost up the crack,

And he must fawn for bread on
Peregrinating Russkis,
A shabby patrician in
Pursuit of *gutses*;

Guzzling goodies
From foreigners' hands,
To redeem a birthright
Eaten in foreign lands.

In threadbare clothes he
Struts and bustles,
Curvets and trips with
Jerky muscles, and

With the irony of
An elegant rudeness,
Piping in sentences
More French than indigenous,

Cries: "*Eh, bien*, ninnies;
See how I run! How I
Make the grade with
Foreign chums! Who

Must first gorge their bellies,
So as to spew 'em empty, who
Boast like Hercules, while I
Milk 'em prudentially.

So, why the squawks from
Patriotic pikers? *Nom de Dieu!*
What's Italy, I ask you, Sir,
If she's not a *taverna?*

Do we want mine host to
Distinguish too nicely?
To ask well-heeled toss-pots
For their *bona fides?*

Better he learn that
What's known as 'honour'
Stretches every whichway,
In the manner of rubber.

The stodgy home-body
Who sends up such a groan,
Has a sort of home-sickness
In his bones. Why, I'm

Told of one grumbler who's
Got it into his noddle,
That for manners and grammar
Home-chat is the model.

He slavers and havers
About Spirit, Art, History. . . .
All those ancient cadavers
Of glorious memory.

But what validity
Has his currency?
I'm Royster-Doyster,
The world my oyster.

My creed's frankness and *élan*,
Plus always keeping going,
Stand-pats and thick-heads can
Have what's over."

How was I supposed to
Rebut *No. 4*? Salutes of bad
Eggs is all I've had
When I've preached before.

So I hewed to *his* line and,
Though stung, said: "How true!
What's Italy but a *rendezvous*
For pirate crews?

One does meet a few
Honest ones who
Come and go, with no
Axe to grind, no row to hoe;

For the rest, Italy's
A bucket; annually
It must catch what's vomited
From the Alps and the sea.

His cash buys each rover
The same obeisance, be
He bandit, slut, or de-
Bagged prince; and he

Perfectly naturally
Makes one of a *canaille*,
Punctilio not mattering
To the garbage fly.

Round this fair horde
With its shady cadres
Of self-styled Lords and
Their non-Ladies—round

This exotic jungle mess
Personified by human dress—
Presses the scum of our own
nation
To dress the stage of degradation.

At the vandal wassails
Of Count Off and Count Iff,
We mete out the brio,
They fork out the *rosbiff*."

"*Eh, bien*, your head wants
Looking at!" cried *No. 4*—that
Martyr to the starched cravat:
"Not only did I freely gather

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Bias and gall from all your blather,
But *scruples* too! I do aver
You're no more than a greenhorn,
Sir,
A babe newborn—*adieu, parbleu*!"

Off he goes, with the demeanour
Of a fellow who's in the know,
And who means to find more
swallows
Before summer goes.

On the Death of Duke Francis IV of Modena

(Per La Morte del Duca Francesco IV de Modena, 1846)

At last,the ducal thug is dead!
God! Stage the march to his stone bed!
For his clergy—prison-guards, whom praying's left goose-necked;
For his last candle—at grave's head, a guillotine erected;
For his safe conduct—a passport, by Satan validated.
While blacklegs stanch their tears with office blotters,
We'll crimp our mourning-bands—to frill pigs' trotters!*

*Modena was (and still is) renowned for its pigs' trotters.

Two Epigrams

Whene'er Lucretia meets a handsome gent,
Love's power is too strong: she's soon recumbent.
Very few men are handsome, yet Lucretia
Seems to find every man a handsome creature.

* * * *

Commonsense, once founder of a school of thought,
Is found no more where scholarship is taught.
It died when Science, its child, dissected it,
Curious to know what made the old man tick.

Translated by Nigel Dennis

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NOTES & TOPICS

"1917": an Afterthought

On Totalitarian Models—By RICHARD LOWENTHAL

SOME non-western nationalist leaders have been far ahead of the western communists in recognising the importance of Russian totalitarian institutions as an engine of state-directed social development, and in viewing this instrumental function as completely separable from the egalitarian and internationalist goals of the communist ideology with which these institutions had been historically bound up in their Russian origin. It was nationalist leaders of this type who were to make the first attempt at a selective imitation of the Russian model of the single-party State.

The first nationalist leader to act in this way was Mustafa Kemal—later Ataturk—at the turn of 1922–3. Having won his "war of liberation" with Soviet support, he decided to transform his wartime ascendancy into a dictatorship of development. Faced with the problem of basing the new régime on the principle of popular sovereignty without granting freedom of organisation to conflicting interest groups, he found a ready-made solution in the single-party state created by his erstwhile Russian allies. But neither then nor in the early 1930s, when he borrowed some of their techniques of planned industrialisation, did he accept the egalitarian and internationalist ideology of the Bolsheviki. I cannot here discuss the strong and weak points of the achievement of Kemalism; but the history of modern Turkey has remained remarkable for proving that even a single-party dictatorship may come to surrender voluntarily its monopoly of power—provided that its legitimation is not based on world-wide, utopian goals, but on a task of national development that is by its nature limited in space and time.

The next non-Communist nation builder to adopt the model was Dr. Sun Yat-sen in late 1923. He was not only impressed by the Bolshevik success in consolidating their revolutionary power and defying the imperialists, but already by Kemal's precedent in imitating the institution of one-party rule without taking over the ideology. In the next few years, the Kuomintang was to benefit greatly from direct Soviet advice not only in becoming a modern, centralistic mass party, but in creating the first Chinese army based on loyalty to a political idea. But in accepting Soviet aid and advice before he had control of a state, Dr. Sun (in contrast to Kemal) felt compelled to accept the co-operation of Chinese Communists in many important positions in his party, thus permitting a germ of dualism which was to grow after his death until Chiang Kai-shek decided, in 1927, to extirpate it by a massacre. Though this traumatic operation did not prevent Chiang from completing the unification of China, it left the Kuomintang régime with a fear of mass organisations that was to become a built-in obstacle to effective modernising reforms. This helped the Chinese Communists to survive in their new rural strongholds. When the conflict with Japan enabled them to compete with the Kuomintang as champions of national resistance as well, they eventually emerged victorious over the largest experiment in nationalist one-party rule that ever was attempted.

A long period elapsed before the next great wave of one-party régimes in under-developed countries started in many of the new African states that emerged in the late 1950s and early '60s, with the adoption of one-party rule by

THIS *is the concluding section of Professor Lowenthal's article in last month's* ENCOUNTER, *"1917, and After: on the Model of the Totalitarian State."*

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Algeria and with President Nasser's efforts to transform his military dictatorship into a party régime. The individual histories and achievements of these régimes cannot be described here, but together with the early cases they seem to permit a few general conclusions.

First, nationalist one-party régimes, even when started with active Soviet support and consciously leaning on the Soviet model, have generally been able either to reject communist goals altogether, or at least to set strict limits to communist influence and infiltration. Second, the success of these régimes in their positive task of development has been extremely uneven, depending on a variety of factors, ranging from their ideological aptitude to preserve internal cohesion and achieve mass mobilisation, to their understanding of the organisational principles of single-party rule and to the presence or absence of a leader of outstanding authority and ability.

On one side, "pure" nationalism without a concept of the revolutionary transformation of society is clearly not sufficient for a party dictatorship of development. On the other, a revolutionary ideology based on a syncretism of Marxist and nationalist ideas will not ensure success if the leaders of the movement do not know how to impose discipline on the mass organisations without paralysing them, if the lack of an outstanding personality tempts them into self-destructive rivalries, or if the leader neglects the concrete task of development and escapes from his problems into international demagogy and megalomaniac self-worship.

Meanwhile in Europe, the model of the single-party state had come to be adopted by political leaders who were fanatically opposed not only to Soviet Communism, but to the egalitarian, rationalist and humanistic values which Communist ideology has retained from the democratic tradition. Fascists and National Socialists believed that it was their historic task to root out the disruptive ideas that had come into the Western world since the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and to destroy all "Marxist" movements, *i.e.* all independent organisations of the working class, as well as "Bolshevism" as the most pernicious fruits of those ideas. Yet, on closer analysis, the fascists turn out to agree with the Bolsheviks not only negatively, in their utter contempt for the liberal aspects of the democratic tradition—freedom of discussion and dissent, protection of minorities and partial interests, security of individual rights under the rule of law—but also in basing the legitimacy of their régimes on the will of the people. The fascists are not traditionalists content to play an auxiliary role in the defence or restoration of God-given dynastic authority, but revolutionaries claiming to carry out the national will in destroying the rule of a conspiracy of alien or separatist interests.

The fascist party and the fascist dictatorship, in pursuing their anti-egalitarian and internationalist goals, thus had to solve the same political dilemma as had the communists in pursuing their egalitarian and internationalist goals: how to combine "democratic" legitimation by a mass movement with suppression of freedom of discussion and of the organisation of interest groups. It is this similarity of the problem that accounts for the similarity of the forms of party organisation and state institutions. But because of the opposition of ideological goals and values, the fascist leaders were not originally conscious of the parallel, and they were only gradually driven to adopt the organisational and institutional devices of their enemies. Thus it was only late in 1921, when the fascist squads had largely escaped from Mussolini's control and turned into an almost non-political terror weapon wielded by the landowners against organised labour, that the later Duce founded the fascist *party* in order to "put politics in command" over the para-military arm. Only this enabled him to exploit the political deadlock between the liberal state and a radical but aimless labour movement, rising within one year to political power, with the help of the now disciplined fascist militia's "March on Rome" but in fact by the "legal road." Again, it was only the growing opposition aroused in the country by the extra-legal terror of his Blackshirts that made him decide in 1925–6 to create a full-fledged single-party state. The resulting régime showed some elements of a nationalist "dictatorship of development," but it directed its dynamism towards expansion rather than to the transformation of the economic and social structure at home. It was this preoccupation with increasing Italy's territory and military power that, by driving the reluctant Duce into his alliance with the much stronger Fuehrer, ultimately led fascism to its doom.

In contrast to Mussolini, Hitler understood the basic principles of a centralistic totalitarian party from the start—even before he developed the clear concept that his party was to become the ruling force of a resurrected Germany, rather than a mere auxiliary of the army. It was only Mussolini's "March on Rome," followed by the climax of the German inflation and the profound social crisis it caused in 1923, that made Hitler decide to aim at a national revolution under his and his party's leadership. He failed in his first bid for power and had to struggle to

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maintain the discipline of his party during the years in the political wilderness that followed. But when the world economic crisis, by making compromise among the various organised interests in Germany increasingly difficult, led to the paralysis of a democracy founded on interest groups at the very time when unemployed workers and bankrupt farmers clamoured for determined state action, he took the new chance of rising to power on the back of the desperate masses. Once in the saddle, Hitler established his single-party régime far more quickly than either Bolshevism in 1917–21 or Fascism in 1922–26—profiting from the experience of both.

Even more than in semi-developed Italy, a nationalist dictatorship in highly industrialised Germany was bound to find its immediate task in the total mobilisation of all human and economic resources for war and territorial expansion; and in the framework of Nazi ideology, these were conceived as means for the creation of an empire based on the principle of racial hierarchy—requiring not only the destruction of the élites of "inferior" peoples and the extermination of the Jews, but the forcible transformation of the biological substance of the German nation itself. German National-Socialism may thus be said to have developed the possibilities of using the system of single-party dictatorship in the service of anti-egalitarian goals to their ultimate conclusions. Its unprecedented destructiveness, ending in what amounted to the self-destruction of the régime and indeed of the German national state, appears as the logical outcome of a utopia of racial domination.

THE EXPERIENCE of the deeds and collapse of Hitler's Third Reich makes it appear improbable that the model of the single-party régime will again be used for similar purposes in an advanced industrial country. It is indeed remarkable that the model has not so far been applied to any such country in its original communist form either, except for the case of its imposition on Czechoslovakia in 1948, when the situation of that country within the Soviet sphere of control was decisive for the outcome. The only countries in which communist parties have established one-party States after coming to power by their own strength in independent revolutions have been underdeveloped countries —Yugoslavia and Albania, China and North Viet Nam.

TAKING a broad historical view, it thus appears that the chances of successful application of the one-party system are best in countries which share with the Russian model the basic unsolved problems of development, yet are not underdeveloped to such an extreme degree that the necessary cadres for such a régime cannot be found, as seems to be the case in some African States. Given the "proper" level of underdevelopment, the question whether a communist or a nationalist single-party régime emerges victorious, or whether the task of development is left to a régime of an altogether different type, seems to depend primarily on historical factors within each particular country.

What seems remarkable, however, is the possibility of the transformation of a nationalist into a communist one-party régime, that has reappeared in recent years. In a sense such a possibility was visible on the horizon in China before 1927, but it then faded from public discussion for more than three decades. It was the decision of Fidel Castro to throw in his lot with the communists, and to merge the remnant of his victorious but disorganised movement with their party, that reopened the question and, together with the radicalisation of the Algerian and West African one-party régimes, caused the Soviets in 1963–4 to develop a political concept for achieving such transformations by means of a strategy of "licensed infiltration" of nationalist one-party régimes by communists.

Yet while the pluralistic decay of the former organisational and ideological unity of the world communist movement has made it easier for a revolutionary nationalist leader to welcome the co-operation of trained communist cadres in his party, it may also have diminished the potential importance of such infiltration. If the communists in question continue to be tied to Soviet leadership, to internationalist doctrine, or even to a precise programme for the road to the classless society, their influence on the nationalist party is likely to remain in most cases severely limited. To some extent this is even confirmed by the special case of Cuba, where it is still an open question how far Castro's régime has really become a communist party régime in the classical sense, and how far it has remained a personal dictatorship using communist slogans and cadres as exchangeable instruments. If, on the other hand, the communists adjust their outlook to the national needs and the nationalist emotions of the countries concerned, their influence may improve the systematic quality but will hardly change the direction of the nationalist régimes.

The future role of the Bolshevik model of the single-party State in developing countries is thus likely to be the most effective where the leaders using the model are most successful in emancipating themselves from the specific ideological beliefs that were linked to the model in its country of origin.

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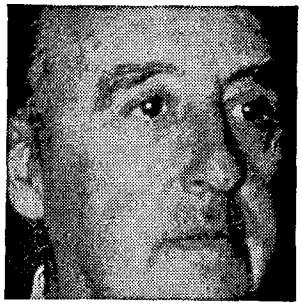

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Dr. Williams' Practice

By Charles Tomlinson

FIVE YEARS AGO—nay, not so much—you would have been hard put to find the merest handful of Williams' verse in an English bookshop. We have had to wait long for the appearance in England of his *Collected Earlier Poems*, but meanwhile there is a new Penguin Williams selection,[1] M. L. Rosenthal's *The W. C. Williams Reader*,[2] and a volume of essays from various hands under the editorship of J. Hillis Miller[3] who has already proved himself to be brilliantly equipped to deal with—though I think he overrates—the art of this poet. Among Miller's ablest commentators are Kenneth Burke, Marianne Moore, Hugh Kenner, and Thom Gunn, and the usefulness of his book is greatly increased by his inclusion of Richard Macksey's excellent chronology and bibliography.

The Penguin selection is brief but judicious, Rosenthal's *Reader* intelligent and packed: we are given large chunks of the prose in this latter and even a long scene from one of Williams' not very good plays. Undoubtedly many favourites are missing, but the reason for this is a clear one: Williams wrote a lot and, for so prolific and hurried a writer, a lot that was good. Perhaps one of the pieces that could be shed without much loss would be that rotten poem, *Impromptu: The Suckers*. It is Dr. Williams at his least inventive, dashing things off between patients. The doggedness, rather than the dash, repays in Williams: "of a slow but accurate understanding" he says of himself. And he will return again and again to a theme or a term over the years to achieve that accuracy. Ian Hamilton complains recently of Williams' "rambling Americanising" in an intemperate article that tries to sink Williams under the faults of his followers. Williams more than justified the right to his own faults by a quality of persistence, beautifully illustrated by Pound in the essay Mr. Miller reprints.

One of the terms to which Williams' persistence keeps returning him is Whitman's "contact." *Contact* was the title of the magazine Williams edited in the 1920s, and the *tactus eruditus* he speaks of in one poem is his obstetrician's reappraisal of that term. "I am mad for it to be in contact with me," says Whitman of nature in *Song of Myself*. So is Williams. The difference lies in that *eruditus* and the way it enters his poetry. "A fact with him," says Kenneth Burke, "finds its justification in the trimness of the wording." Whitman is a great poet, but he is never trim.

"The sharpened faculties which require exactness" (as Marianne Moore puts it) are what distinguishes the tone of Williams from that of his origins. When he speaks, in the prose section of *Spring and All*, of Whitman, the company he puts him in is that of Gris and Cézanne, announcing that "Whitman's proposals are of the same piece with the modern trend toward imaginative understanding of life." At this point, the imagination for Williams was identified with the cubist re-structuring of reality, and after a rapid transition from Gris, Cézanne, and Whitman to Shakespeare, Williams tells us of the last named: "He holds no mirror up to nature but with his imagination rivals nature's composition with his own." Williams' cubist perspective dominates his inheritance. Kenneth Rexroth, in an excellent and too little known essay, *The Influence of French Poetry on American*, has commented on Williams' cubist allegiances and he expresses the relation between these and Williams' famous localism with great perspicacity:

> ... Williams could be said to belong in the Cubist tradition—Imagism, Objectivism, the dissociation and rearrangement of the elements of concrete reality, rather than rhetoric or free

[1] *Penguin Modern Poets 9.* DENISE LEVERTOV, KENNETH REXROTH, W. C. WILLIAMS, 3s. 6d.

[2] *The W. C. Williams Reader.* Edited by M. L. ROSENTHAL. MacGibbon and Kee, 42s.

[3] *William Carlos Williams: a Collection of Critical Essays.* Edited by J. HILLIS MILLER. Prentice-Hall, 16s.

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association. But where Reverdy, Apollinaire, Salmon, Cendrars, Cocteau, and Jacob are all urban, even megalopolitan, poets of that Paris which is the international market of objects of *vertu*, vice and art, Williams has confined himself in single strictness to the life before his eyes —the life of a physician in a small town twenty miles from New York. In so doing, his localism has become international and timeless. His long quest for a completely defenceless simplicity of personal speech produces an idiom identical with that which is the end product of centuries of polish, refinement, tradition, and revolution.

On the face of it, the inheritance Williams brings to cubism seems to be very close in spirit not only to Whitman but also to Emerson and Thoreau. If "contact" is re-explored, so is Emerson's attachment to the vernacular: "the speech of Polish mothers" was where Williams insisted he got his English from. "Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and work-yard made," said Emerson. Williams' famous "flatness" comes not from the field, but from the urban "work-yard" of New Jersey. As Hugh Kenner writes of Williams' characteristic diction: "That words set in Jersey speech rhythms mean less but mean it with greater finality, is Williams' great technical perception."

EMERSON SEEMS TO HAVE prepared the ground for Williams' other war-cry, "No ideas but in things" with his "Ask the fact for the form." Thoreau sounds yet closer with: "The roots of letters are things." Again Emerson tells over things—"The meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat . . ."—in the shape of a list very like Williams' "rigmaroles" as he calls his poems. "Bare lists of words," says Emerson, "are found suggestive to an imaginative mind." When Williams, long after Emerson and after Whitman's application of this, constructed "list" poems, he came in for suspicion, as in the interview he prints as part of *Paterson* V and which Mr. Rosenthal includes in his selection:

Q. . . . here's part of a poem you yourself have written: . . . "2 partridges/ 2 mallard ducks/ a Dungeness crab/ 24 hours out/ of the Pacific/ and 2 live-frozen/ trout/ from Denmark . . ." Now, that sounds just like a fashionable grocery list!

A. It is a fashionable grocery list.

Q. Well—is it poetry?

A. . . . It is the American idiom. Rhythmically it's organised as a sample of the American idiom. . . . If you say "2 partridges, 2 mallard ducks, a Dungeness Crab"—if you treat that rhythmically, ignoring the practical sense, it forms a jagged pattern. It is, to my mind, poetry.

Q. But if you don't "ignore the practical sense" . . . you agree that it is a fashionable grocery list.

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A. Yes. Anything is good material for poetry. Anything. I've said it time and time again.

And, of course, Emerson and Whitman had said it time and again before him, though Emerson could never quite get there in his own poetry and Whitman, as Williams complains, "took his eyes off the words themselves which should have held him," "he forgot . . . everything but his 'message'."

Paterson v came out in 1958. Years before, Williams had formulated his kind of poem made out of anything and with a jagged pattern, in the 1920 preface to *Kora in Hell*, when he wrote that a poem is "tough by no quality it borrows from a logical recital of events nor from the events themselves but solely from the attenuated power which draws perhaps many broken things into a dance by giving them thus a full being." He was to return to the idea of poem as dance. If, as with Emerson, Williams seems to "ask the fact for the form," the form, once it comes, is free of the fact, is a dance *above* the fact. After *Kora in Hell* he had another shot at the formula in the prose of *Spring and All* (1923) where he concludes of John of Gaunt's speech in *Richard II* that "his words are related not to their sense as objects adherent to his son's welfare or otherwise, but as a dance over the body of his condition accurately accompanying it." This summary of Williams' own methods is hard to come by in its full context. Mr. Miller prints part of it and Mr. Rosenthal, with some overlaps, other parts. Mr. Miller, in his introduction, even goes so far as to say that, without the prose in *Spring and All*, "two of Williams' most famous poems, "By the road to the contagious hospital" and "The Red Wheelbarrow" . . . cannot be fully understood." But he tantalisingly fails to relate these two poems to their surrounding prose. Mr. Macksey, one of the contributors to Miller's collection of essays, also remarks on the links, but doesn't specify what they are. All this is bound to frustrate the reader of a poet whose early works are often unobtainable—*The Great American Novel* is a case in point—and whose early formulations often surpass his later ones. Mr. Rosenthal interestingly concludes his volume with Williams' latish essay, *On Measure—Statement for Cid Corman* (1953). Is it too much to hope that soon we shall see the text of *Speech Rhythm*? This is Williams' earliest piece (a first draft of it dated from 1913) on the same theme, where, as one researcher tells us,

> Williams never once refers to American Speech as distinct from English in this (his best) version of Measure. Nor does he assume a specifically American prosody. On the contrary, he relates his concept of a flexible system—a structural method—to the current preoccupations of Imagism. (M. Weaver in *Form*, No. 2, p. 22.)

One sees how the element of chauvinism—the *American* fact at all costs!—crept into and often distorted Williams' thinking: he had to pull against those famous exiles Pound and Eliot, he had to prove the worth of native ground; but although, as Mr. Gunn's essay reminds us, "he insisted on the American idiom, we must," says Mr. Gunn, "remember why: writing 'thoroughly local in origin has some chance of being universal in application'; that idiom is part of a widely-used language, his enrichment of which has a bearing on all of us who read and write it."

So he of the conversations with Valéry Larbaud, he who wrote of Matisse and admired Juan Gris, he who was to translate Soupault and Char, refused to be led away from the dissonant roar of the Passaic River. It is only by the time of *Paterson*, Book IV, that he will bring Europe into the documentation of the city, when the dissonances of the local are measured against the funeral of the Abbess Hildegard and the chorale she "had enjoined them to sing . . . she had written for the occasion." Within the milieu of the Stieglitz group, Williams focused the cubist tradition on locality, aligning cubist fragmentations with those of modern photography (Stieglitz, Steichen). Then in turn he was to face the local towards the universal. By *Paterson* V he had *earned* the right to address Brueghel, Bosch, Dürer, Toulouse-Lautrec, and the artists of the Unicorn Tapestries—they whose localism was also now a universal affair.

Yet Williams' particularity certainly shortened the temper of some of his formulations. Rexroth who now shares a Penguin Modern Poets volume with him pays him there a decidedly sentimental homage:

> *The day will come*
> *When a young woman will walk by the lucid*
> *Williams River,*
> *Where it flows through an idyllic*
> *News from nowhere sort of landscape. . . .*

He once had sharper things to say about a kind of Americanism that Williams more than occasionally seemed to be promulgating: "When today someone tells me that my Duty is To Express What Is Native to America, i am just a little afraid that tomorrow i shall be told to Go Back to Russia Where I Came From."

Perhaps it was something of this strain in Williams that caused Kenneth Burke to remark that often what calls for commendation is not

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"in the excellence of his poetics, but in the excellence of his results." As a "way" for poetry "bare lists of words" and their suggestiveness to "an imaginative mind" could only mean anything in terms of a practice far from naïve and accompanied by great aural precision. Williams, in one of his last poems, specifies the elements of that precision if his often centrifugal forms are to succeed:

beauty is a shell
from the sea
where she rules triumphant
till love has had its way with her

scallops and
lion's paws
sculptured to the
tune of retreating waves

undying accents
repeated till
the ear and the eye lie
down together in the same bed

It is a quality of ear—the mind's ear—that marries the disparate elements in Williams' verse, a quickness to catch the beauties of asymmetrical arrangement and rigmarole, which, like the components of a mobile, seem to be moving out of the true, until we see that that "true" was one of our preconceived mental ratios and the components relate to a whole after all. Not many of Williams' followers have an equivalent for this ear or for his propriety of cadence. But Denise Levertov, Williams' other neighbour in *Penguin Modern Poets 9*, learned early an ability to make *"the ear and the eye lie/ down together in the same bed."* Characterising the kind of movement that she and Williams share as "intently haphazard"—the intentness rectifying the apparent casualness—she writes almost a manifesto for their type of poem:

Let's go—much as that dog goes,
intently haphazard. The
Mexican light on a day that
"smells like autumn in Connecticut"
makes iris ripples on his
black gleaming fur—and that too
is as one would desire—a radiance
consorting with the dance.
Under his feet
rocks and mud, his imagination, sniffing,
engaged in its perceptions—dancing
edgeways, there's nothing
the dog disdains on his way,
nevertheless he
keeps moving, changing
pace and approach but
not direction—"every step an arrival."

Miss Levertov is English, of Welsh and Jewish parentage. Her Jewish father became an Anglo-

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Catholic priest. She herself has become an American and her poetry, written in a language she had to learn, has immeasurably benefited by the transplantation. We tend to forget that her first book, *The Double Image*, came out in England in 1946 and was very much a product of that phase of English writing. Williams' practice gave her the possibility of new cadences, something toughly resistant to counteract her innate romanticism. The romanticism continues to seep through and she will characteristically end a poem (*To the Snake*), in which she has had her experience of the snake's otherworld, with:

I returned
smiling and haunted, to a dark morning.

The trouble with a lot of Miss Levertov's work is that she is role-playing: she *knows* she is "smiling and haunted" and we are supposed to be impressed. Often we are asked to be impressed on the strength of Lawrencian cliché like "dark morning," and "dark" is an adjective she overworks elsewhere. She is very fluent, very persuasive and, at times, it works. It works least well when she is playing her public role of Woman responding to the large events of our time—"During the Eichmann Trial" is a compendium of her faults and the Viet Nam poems in her recent *The Sorrow Dance* share its weaknesses. The success of her lyricism, on the other hand, has everything to do with a refinement of ear that Williams seems to have developed in her.

Rexroth, a confirmed admirer of Williams, lacks precisely that. He has a good eye and he has excellent "ideas":

. . . even the trees
Over my head cannot be distinguished,
But I know they are knobcone pines, that their cones
Endure unopened on the branches, at last
To grow imbedded in the wood, waiting for fire
To open them and reseed the burned forest.

but you seldom feel that eye and ear lie down together with just that inevitability which would make the poems first-rate. There is a superb conception at work in the last part of "The Signature of All Things":

When I dragged the rotten log
From the bottom of the pool,
It seemed heavy as stone.
I let it lie in the sun
For a month; and then chopped it
Into sections, and split them
For kindling, and spread them out
To dry some more. Late that night;
After reading for hours,
While moths rattled at the lamp,
The saints and the philosophers
On the destiny of men;
I went out on my cabin porch,
And looked up through the black forest
At the swaying islands of stars.
Suddenly I saw at my feet,
Spread on the floor of night, ingots
Of quivering phosphorescence,
And all about were scattered chips
Of pale cold light that was alive.

Plain handling of the subject matter is almost sufficient to bring that off, but is the tune quite new enough or the movement lithe enough to keep us going with aesthetic delight from word to word, cadence to cadence? What we too often look for in vain is a less laboured transit, a less impeded trajectory than Mr. Rexroth's leisurely habit of telling us "I lie . . . I think . . . I stand . . . I walk . . ." will permit. "More real than reality," he says of a vision of his wife. Prove it, we say, feeling that the claim isn't matched by an answering reality in the mesh of his language. Some of the best things in the Rexroth selection are his versions from Chinese and Japanese. They leave us asking for no proof at all. It is a pity his prose is little read over here. It helps make sense, among other things, of the Williams milieu and vividly re-creates the world of the 'twenties and 'thirties in which Williams grew to strength.

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Reconsidering Huey Long

By D. W. Brogan

JUST AFTER THE MURDER of Senator Huey P. Long, I was in the United States and was discussing his role with two very close friends of mine, one a very rising young corporation lawyer (who has since risen to the top of that important branch of American industry) and the other a rising young Senator, one of the most able and trusted of the New Deal leaders. My lawyer friend objected to the Senator's describing the late statesman as a brilliant lawyer: "He wasn't a real lawyer at all." "Maybe," said the Senator, "maybe he was not a lawyer of your type. But I noticed that the alleged brilliant lawyers in the Senate never liked to tangle with him." Yet the Senator, who was an admirer of Huey Long's talents, was really rather relieved at his murder. For rightly or wrongly, as both these memorials[1] to Long make clear, the New Dealers were alarmed at the possibility of FDR's being completely outflanked on the left by the great demagogue from Louisiana.

In those remote days, they were not in the least afraid of a Republican revival (despite the illusions of some Republican leaders to which I can bear testimony). But after the first careless rapture of the New Deal, things were not going very well and "Thunder on the Left" was getting increasingly loud. The man who could exploit it was obviously Huey Long. He had what is indispensable in America, a secure political base in Louisiana. His role there was described as dictatorial. He was not only Senator, he was in fact also Governor, although other people had to hold the nominal office of Governor. His personal machine was new in its efficiency and ruthlessness; his disregard for the manners and conventions of the Establishment was complete. And FDR, for all his great demagogic talents, could never quite appear as "the common man" he was publicly defending and praising.

Long was one of the most formidable figures in American political history, recalling such great demagogues of the past as Thaddeus Stevens and, in an odd way, William Jennings Bryan. Professor Williams, both in his inaugural lecture to Oxford and in his introduction to Long's autobiography, sets the stage for the dictator with great learning and acuteness. As he points out, Huey P. Long was in only a very limited sense a dictator. He could have been overthrown by a local political revolt in Louisiana. He had not founded, and he did not found, and knew he had not founded, a political machine that was bound to survive him in all its power. Of course, some of the Long "cohorts," as Americans now put it, held office long after his death largely because they represented the Long tradition. So did members of his family. But it was only for a few years that Long was "Lord of the Ascendant." His was as personal a role as, possibly, is the role of General de Gaulle.

A great many people took complacently the revival of political assassination in the United States for very foolish reasons. They were shocked by Huey: had he not received the captain of a German cruiser in his pyjamas (was this Captain von Arnauld de la Perière, the very distinguished Prussian Huguenot sailor later killed by our bombs at Brest?). Then Huey Long was beaten up in a Long Island country club. The aristocratic circles of New Orleans regarded him as a boor as well as a danger. Then his assassination presented some of the problems, real or imagined, presented by the Kennedy assassination. Was it a private assassination? Was the young doctor who killed Long and was himself killed, acting for offended family honour? Or, as was widely rumoured at the time, was Long gunned down by his own guards? I believe the official version was the correct one. But it was characteristic of the atmosphere of New Orleans then (it is characteristic of the atmosphere of New Orleans still), that the theory of treason *inside* the Long machine was so widely accepted.

Looking back, one can see that Huey was among Southern demagogues (of whom there have been too many) the best and the most beneficent. As Professor Williams points out, Long was peculiarly a Louisiana product. Louisiana is really two communities, the "Creole" community of New Orleans and the Mississippi delta and the "Anglo-Saxon" community of the Protestant and rather impoverished north. It was Long's first achievement that he united the claims of the poor hardscrabble farmers of the

[1] *Every Man a King: the autobiography of Huey P. Long*. Quadrangle Paperbacks, Chicago, $2.25; *Huey P. Long*: An Inaugural Lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 26 January 1967, by T. HARRY WILLIAMS, Oxford University Press, 3s. 6d.

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north with the claims of the *Cajuns* of the delta. This took great political talent, and Long had that political talent. It is true he never captured New Orleans itself. In this century, no Protestant has ever been elected Mayor of New Orleans, and no Catholic has ever been elected Governor of Louisiana. But in so bitterly divided a state, divided between two sets of whites and both sets of whites divided from the Negroes, Long served the extremely useful purpose of a "syndic," as the French put it, of all discontents. He ran an extremely efficient Cave of Adullam.

Professor Williams quotes my lamented friend, the late A. J. Liebling, on New Orleans, which he described as a kind of Beirut, and there certainly is something Oriental or Mediterranean about the city. It is perhaps not accidental that its suburb on the east bank of the Mississippi is called Algiers; the last time I visited Algiers a few years ago, I saw a number of citizens sitting on "their hunkers," as we say in Scotland, as if they were in the Algiers of the Mediterranean.

But Liebling overdid the Oriental and Mediterranean parallel. I don't know that New Orleans and Louisiana were or are any more corrupt than a good many Northern states. The inhabitants are perhaps franker about it, but that is all. I do not know that Louisiana is any more boss-ridden today than some Northern states I could mention. Huey Long did not control Louisiana any more than Mayor Daley now controls Chicago. True, there are still oddities. I was in New Orleans when Huey's alienated brother Earl Long, Governor of the state, escaped from captivity in the Texas mental home to which his wife and nephew had committed him. The proceedings in New Orleans were highly hilarious, and the sympathy of most of the people I talked to was with the Governor. He seemed to me no more eccentric than a good many other Southern politicians. So I asked a very eminent New Orleans lawyer when they knew that a Governor of Louisiana had gone round the bend. "When Russell Long tells us," was the reply. Russell Long, Huey's son, was and is the more important Senator from Louisiana and, as far as anybody now is, is the boss of that state. But although he is very like his father in appearance, he is not a quarter of the man his father was.

Professor Williams tells us that *Every Man a King* was not a ghosted job, and certainly it has many marks of Huey's personality. There is an ostentatious demonstration of learning which suggests the self-educated man, for Huey had to come up the hard way. There is a good deal of effective humour at the expense of his enemies. But there is more than that. There is

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an intelligent and plausible account of Huey Long's case for himself as the re-maker of Louisiana, and I think the case is a good one.

It was not Huey's bad manners that alienated the proper people of New Orleans. It was his attacks on their economic privileges, especially their tax privileges. I have been told (and it is roughly true) that John D. Rockefeller Jr. from about 1912 or 1913 had tried to run the Standard Oil Company in a much more ethical way than his father had thought it necessary to do. But it is quite evident from Huey's book that the Standard Oil operators in Louisiana "hadn't got the message." I do not claim for a moment that any assertion of Huey Long's is "confirmation strong as proofs of Holy Writ," but I am inclined, till better informed, to believe that Huey's case against Standard Oil was justified. The money that Huey insisted on collecting from the "interests" he spent extravagantly but also wisely. The great Huey P. Long bridge is, I think, one of the monuments to his achievements which do him credit. The greatly improved school system (improved for blacks as well as whites) does him credit. So does the state university at Baton Rouge. (It is a pity that the President of the university ended up in gaol owing to his free-handed handling of the university's finances.) The thrift, not to say meanness, of administration which marked until recently the highly ethical state of Virginia was not practised in Louisiana, but I think there is probably a great deal more to be said for the late Senator Huey Long than there is to be said for the late Senator Harry F. Byrd.

Some of Long's proposals for Federal legislation naturally alarmed the interests. They were something like what was called at the time of the French Revolution "an agrarian law," lopping off all wealth above a quite high sum. Whether he meant this or not I do not know. If he did, he was a kind of Gracchus Babeuf. But he certainly scared the very easily scared American rich, some of whom clung to FDR as a deliverer.

Long has been the subject of an admirable political novel by Robert Penn Warren, *All the King's Men* (1946). There is another novel, not nearly so good, but with some merit, Andor's *The Lion in the Streets*. There are a number of very good specialised studies on the Long régime in Louisiana, including the brilliant brief book (*The Earl of Louisiana*, 1961), that A. J. Liebling wrote—almost the last thing he did. There was even a movie in which Bob Hope played the main part, remotely connected with what was unkindly called the "new Louisiana purchase," that is to say, the calling off of Federal prosecution of the survivors of the Long machine as preparation for the presidential election of 1936. As it turned out, it was not necessary to propitiate the ghost of Huey. I did not share the alarms of my friends about Huey defeating FDR in 1936. He was a demagogue of genius, but it was the kind of genius that did not necessarily travel very well out of the white mule and tabasco country. But there have been many much worse servants of the American people in this century than Huey Long, and certainly none who was more entertaining and whose career casts more light on some of the complexities of the American way of life, especially in the South.

Recent Verse

In *Briggflatts*,[1] Basil Bunting speaks with a firm, individual voice. His poetry is Northumbrian—about a particular landscape, to which he returns. The poem is an autobiography, but also the history of the landscape as it entwines with a life:

> *Skulls cropped for steel caps*
> *huddle round Stainmore.*
> *Their becks ring on limestone*
> *whisper to peat.*
> *The clogged cart pushes the horse downhill,*
> *In such soft air*
> *they trudge and sing*
> *laying the tune frankly on the air.*
> *All sounds fall still,*
> *fellside bleat*
> *hide-and-seek peewit.*
>
> *Her pulse their pace*
> *palm countering palm....*

There is no posturing in this verse: the child simply has a calling.

> *Poet appointed dare not decline*
> *to walk among the bogus, nothing to authenticate*
> *the mission imposed....*
>
> *counts beat against beat, bus conductor*
> *against engine against wheels against*
> *the pedal, Tottenham Court Road, decodes*
> *thunder....*
>
> *He lies with one to long for another....*

From Pound, or from much earlier sources, the author has recovered a form of verse in which he can express a modern sensibility without losing the singing quality of a traditional voice. How much this depends on Northern intonation, and how much urban writers working in the south can learn from this poem, are questions which cannot be answered yet. Certainly it

[1] *Briggflatts*. By Basil Bunting. Fulcrum, 10s.

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would be good if this poem could be a source for new writing.

Norman McCaig[2] makes the opposite journey from city to alien country: his is an urban mind, ironic, detached, seeing a landscape that he is not a part of—though seeing it with a keen eye—

Possessive sea, possessing
Only itself: huge lumbering sea—
That fat-fingered lacemaker who,
By sitting on shells, gives them
Their shapes: mountains
Reaching halfway to somewhere or other:
And heather and grass and me
And a gull, as usual
Tuning his bagpipe
And not going on to the tune.

There is a feeling of two distinct processes in many of these poems—the posing and solving of a problem, and its illustration by the senses. The senses, however, are sharp in all the poems; and in McCaig's love-poetry there is a more satisfying unity. Here metaphors from music, creating a metaphysical complexity, express a concentrated response to a particular person, and an unrelieved gratitude.

David Wevill[3] seems to be trying to establish a new kind of poem, in which the centre of consciousness can be some quite objective eye, like that of a television camera, capable of recording a variety of detail from many different standpoints, human and non-human, at the same moment: a poem that will correspond to an awareness of the world through sciences, psychological theories, and other people's verse, at the same time as through the writer's own senses. The language—which can include the clinical or the literary—need not necessarily be a dialect spoken by anyone outside a poem of this kind; and the standpoint from which a story is related need not be that of any human being: the verse, like the camera, can zoom and close-up, or track, as in "Our Lady of Kovno" (where a crucified woman is exposed naked to ants, then shot):

Now she is twice dead.
The dark has taken her body.
Ants twist and change their grip,
Ants crofted in the season of reproaches,
High times and furtive fires—
Our lady of pins
In a dry sweat which will not break or open
To any crying comfort. . . .
Ladder-lost, the ants
Buckle and fall: the shot sends panic in.

[2] *Surroundings*. By NORMAN MCCAIG. Hogarth & Chatto, 15s.
[3] *A Christ of the Icefloes*. By DAVID WEVILL. Macmillan, 18s.

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The creature moon comes up
In solemn stealing; ants carry her blood to their holes
On tiny shrill bobbins. The hour of her death
Crosses from plain to hills; the marshes sing,
A steel helmet buckles the soldier's skull.

This is David Wevill's second book.

Miss Elizabeth Jennings,[4] in *The Mind has Mountains*, takes the reader through an English mental hospital, after her attempted suicide. These poems keep close to a single consciousness, which we see re-establishing, in alien territory, the unassuming, observant kindness of its everyday life. The poems are compassionate. In certain lines we can hear Miss Jennings' voice:

There should be peace for gentle ones, not pain

But the versification in this volume is often limp, and produces shapeless effects which I do not think the author can want:

Because of all of this, it was a shock
to find that you
were really bad, depressed, withdrawn from me
more than I knew.

[4] *The Mind has Mountains*. By Elizabeth Jennings. Macmillan, 18s.
[5] *Mishaps Perhaps*. By Carl Solomon. Distributed by City Lights.

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And her experiments in broken verse-forms at the end of the book do not seem to be exactly in her own voice—a voice that in visionary poems like "A Dream of Birth" has spoken with complete assurance, in a technique that seems to have grown out of a given rhythm of feeling, rather than out of the conscious decision to write in lines of ten syllables or of irregular patterns.

Also about madness, but from a very different point of view, is *Mishaps Perhaps*,[5] a book of prose and verse-fragments by Carl Solomon. In the 'fifties Allen Ginsberg dedicated *Howl* to him. At the age of twenty-one, he went into a mental hospital and asked voluntarily for a lobotomy. By travelling without the suitcases of dignity, he has moved through territories not often mapped in this way—worlds of mental-hospital jargon, bureaucratic language, and post-beat prose—maintaining always the gentle and ironic speech-rhythms that form the continuity of his work. Here he sees himself being interrogated by a "sane" society:

Do you love your mother? Your finger-nails show dirt. Your breath is bad. Do you like girls?
And I have lost my credentials. I liked a girl but she left me for another man. Was she of good character? I thought so in the beginning.

From hospital, he does not write as a patient waiting for cure, but as a stylist and chronic victim rejecting, in the name of the homosexual world and of his own lucidity, the psychiatrists who give him shock treatment:

I couldn't understand what they (who drove me into madhouses twice) thought.... I have never yet seen an attractive psychiatrist....

And of the way of life that the world seems to require of him ("Relationships"):

I am utterly unconcerned with the necessity
for producing offspring
And have no need for happiness which is the
primary obsession of our day.
Are you happy?
Being of Jewish descent and
consequently
Unhappy of visage
I have no need for such contentments
As produce the gleaming smile
And the sonorous voice.

Carl Solomon is a man without the capacity for lying who remains himself and gets locked up: whether there is a causal connection between these two facts would require a treatise, for instance by Dr. Laing. In his journey through the psychiatric wards he redeems for sane understanding worlds which we often shut out of consciousness. I hope this book is the beginning, not the summary, of his writing life.

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PETER LEVI[6] by contrast is a poet most himself when inhabiting some separate character or landscape. The most satisfying poems in this book are perhaps "History Lesson," "Monologue spoken by the pet canary of Pope Pius XII," and "Thirty Ways of Drowning in the Sea." In this last poem he has developed a new and tighter verse-form, and a clearer descriptive eye; and some lines have a compression that is wholely individual:

Sea promontories beat their wings of rock.

or the opening lines:

The surf breaks. Is never silent.
The wind catches the breathing of the surf
or catches in the breathing of the surf.
The surf hangs in the hearing of the wind
and is not heard.
The wind is never silent.

The book shows a distinct gain in strength between the first poem and the last. It is illustrated by a card made for Peter Levi by David Jones, which also forms the cover, and is beautiful.

Brian Jones,[7] aged twenty-seven and appearing in Alan Ross' new London Magazine Poets, is a writer confident within his world, technically skilful, and capable of producing lines like these (from "Talking Landscape"):

I allow the hare to flourish, and to rear
His delicate profile in the startled air.

This is a poetry of surfaces. The striking images make the reader see clearly once, rather than set up harmonics of meaning:

the snowmen shrink to tiny pyramids
their eyes of frizzled coke roll out like tears....

But the rhythms are delicate enough for the images to superimpose on each other and give a cumulative effect, as at the end of "Thaw":

the heart that through the rigid months became
a memory of spring, an easy yearning
can be itself again, trembling, susceptible.

This is Mr. Jones' first book of poems, and a promising, assured beginning.

ANOTHER FIRST BOOK, re-issued after eleven years, is Charles Tomlinson's *The Necklace*.[8] These beautiful and acutely observed poems, by a painter turned writer, set a standard of respect

[6] *Fresh Water, Sea Water*. By PETER LEVI, S.J. Black Raven, 21s.
[7] *Poems*. By BRIAN JONES. London Magazine Editions. Alan Ross, Ltd., 6s. 6d.
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for the forms of objects in space from which several poets have learnt since (Mr. McCaig is perhaps one of them). They brought in a new kind of verse—out of Pound and Chinese—which is still producing some of the most economic and taut effects in modern writing.

The shore, for instance,
Spreading between wall and wall;
The sea-voice
Tearing the silence from the silence.

The Oxford Press typographically less successful reprint shows what a debt was owed, in the small edition of 1955, to Oscar Mellor at the Fantasy Press. In these almost calligraphic poems his hand-setting found one of its best subjects. A recent article and list of publications (in *Priapus* No. 6) summarises the work of the Fantasy Press since its start in 1952, an impressive record of births.

One of the most valuable of recent books arrives from America. *The Sea and the Honeycomb*,[9] from the Sixties Press, Minnesota, is a collection of very short poems (many translated from French or German or from Arabic, through Spanish). The editor believes that "poetry in the English language has not developed any form that really responds to the rapidity and swiftness of our emotions."

> An Alexandrian scholar is lurking inside most American poets: the American poet sitting at his desk writes a fine, intense poem of seven or eight lines, then a hand silently appears from somewhere inside his shirt and hastily adds fifteen more lines, telling us what the emotion means, relating it to philosophy, and adding a few moral comments.

The examples he chooses of the new form—the poem of some four lines—include two poems by Whitman, *Ed è subito sera* by Quasimodo, *Le Hibou* by Apollinaire, and (indirectly translated from Arabic) complete short poems like:

Each flower opened its mouth in the darkening air
Feeling about for the breasts of the abundant rain.
Meanwhile the armies of black-skinned clouds, loaded with water passed by majestically,
Bristling with the golden swords of lightning.

There is a form here (Tomlinson is the poet who came nearest to it ten years ago in England) which may well be fruitful. In Bly's words: "The strength of a new form is that it makes both poet and reader aware of feelings they'd hardly noticed before...." This book, printed in Holland, is particularly well produced.

[9] *The Sea and the Honeycomb*, Edited by ROBERT BLY. Sixties Press, Minnesota, $2.00 cloth, $1.00 paperback.

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Robert Bly is among the translators who have contributed to *From the Hungarian Revolution*[10] —a collection of poems edited by David Ray. This book is not even in quality, but that was not its main purpose. It has taken a wide range —folk songs, poems produced in prisons between the War and the Revolution, and the poetry of the Revolution itself—and gives an extraordinary insight into the feelings of those years, and into a civilisation with which our own was mixed ten years ago—but mixed incompletely, since the refugees who came spoke little English and set out to learn the language of their new country, rather than to tell us about their own. Now we can read their own poetry, and the realities behind the public events are more clear. Many of the political prisoners relied on smuggled copies of poems, English poems among them, to preserve their sanity while they were imprisoned. This is a severe test for a poem—but perhaps the one a writer ought always to apply to his own work.

THERE ARE two pamphlets. The first is of translations by Michael Hamburger, from Hans Magnus Enzensberger.[11] They read well in English, and are spare and without illusions. This good and inexpensive pamphlet may revive interest in Michael Hamburger's and Christopher Middleton's wide-ranging anthology of modern German Poetry which introduced so much new poetry into English when it appeared five years ago.

... one thing for which he fought all his life
with words, tooth and claw, grimly,
cunningly, off his own bat—

the thing which he called his peace.
now that he's got it, there is no longer a mouth
over his bones, to taste it with.

And in a pamphlet by Gerry Wells (from Outpost Publications), there is an excellent poem—"The Warrior"—which stands out from other verse in more even books, by being a loving and detailed response to another person. From that, the invention seems to follow—in a long extended metaphor—effortlessly.

Last, there are Lawrence Durrell's most recent poems, *The Ikons*.[13] These get better as the book grows, and some of the last ones (like "Blood Count") are among the best Durrell has written:

[10] *From the Hungarian Revolution*. Edited by DAVID RAY. Cornell University Press, 40s.
[11] *Poems*. By HANS MAGNUS ENZENSBERGER. Translated by MICHAEL HAMBURGER. Northern House, 3s.
[12] *The Warrior*. By GERRY WELLS. Outposts, 5s.
[13] *The Ikons*. By LAWRENCE DURRELL. Faber, 13s. 6d.

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Meanwhile upon the outer rind there is
No sickness in the heart of time
The fruit breathes on the tree and gestures
The bark fresh, the leafage of hands dewy
Drives the beautiful wand of your flesh
Upwards into another spring, sap rising.

The language of these last poems is musical and unexpected, the imagery has the quality of momentary lightning flashes, and it reveals landscapes and human beings with a history, understood in terms of the human body and of death. They renew the love of life as it is.

Alasdair Clayre

Seferis, Drop by Drop

On the Greek Style. By GEORGE SEFERIS. Introduction by REX WARNER. *The Bodley Head*, 21s.

THE DOZEN or so prose pieces—"criticism" is altogether too distant and cold a word for them—collected in this volume represent about a third of Seferis' work outside his formal poetry. The distinction, even so, is in a way arbitrary, for despite their occasional nature and gently discursive manner—perhaps even because of—they work on the reader in a similar fashion to poetry, seem merely another way of writing it. Some of these essays or "attempts," as the Greek title has it, are already famous: the comparison between Cavafy and Eliot, the lecture on the *Memoirs* of Makryannis, the semi-literate General who was the hero of the War of Independence, the speech made at the opening of an exhibition of Theophilos' paintings. Others are less well known, the note on the poetry of Sikelianos, the short texts called "On a Phrase of Pirandello" and "Art in our Times," the essay on Antoniou. Many of them began as talks, either on radio or delivered at the British Institute in Athens in the late 'forties, and they retain, as does Seferis' verse, a conversational manner. They are devoid of phrase-making or epigram, there are few images or similes to arrest the attention; simply a series of inquiries and comments, in no particular order, on writers and painters and through them on the nature of art, particularly Greek art. The manner is hesitant, tentative, though the conviction about essentials is never in doubt, and even the flat passages are irrigated by a kind of concealed poetry, as if subterranean springs were constantly at work.

Yet no one could be fooled by the inconclusive quality of Seferis' thought, by the mildness of his tone, any more than they could mistake the authority of his presence. When I saw him last, in Athens, a year ago, he was still recovering from an unnerving car accident (in which he'd been badly bruised and his wife had broken her arm). As he shambled about his flat, which, tucked in behind the Stadium, looks across at Lycabettus and the Acropolis, he talked about the silence of Ezra Pound whom he had recently met and about the poetry of Yeats whom he was re-reading. The air was blue with the smoke of *Papastratos* cigarettes ("my only remaining vice"), that drifted up against the backs of the volumes of poetry lining the small, cool room. It was impossible not to feel, at one and the same time, both the formidable strength of this ex-Ambassador's attachment to his art and the single-minded patience, during a life of almost permanent exile and diplomatic preoccupation, with which he had stalked his prey. The silence of Pound impressed him; and it is an unnoisy, reflective calm, in a situation—cultural, social, and political—of unusual ambiguity, that isolates Seferis' own writing. All inessentials have been refined away; in a life that has at last returned the poet to his own country and to his private trade, silence dominates. Personal withdrawal, however, does not imply indifference. If Seferis' style has a certain aloof fastidiousness about it, his warm attachments and human involvements have been equally evident. His poetry has always been one of concern, though not openly one of commitment.

> What I am saying [he writes in his pre-war discussion on Hellenism] is that contemporary Greece, attempting, as she is, to find the right attitude towards her ancient tradition, which is known to her exclusively through foreign sources; beginning only now to become conscious even of her recent history, and forced to import the greater part of her intellectual requirements, presents a kind of intellectual landscape in which there are scarcely any discernible landmarks and all around lie tracts of barren and largely unknown country. As for the artist who wishes to live in this land, he is sometimes, if I may say so, very cruelly isolated among these barren tracts, parched up, and withered away. And this is why we see so many at the starting point and so few reaching the end of the course.

Reading this book of Seferis' and his *Poems* (in Rex Warner's fine versions), nearly all written abroad, is to understand the force of this. Much of the prose is, necessarily, taken up

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with specifically Greek subjects, questions of language and identity, of tradition and alienation, and one cannot pretend that more than a handful of Greek writers in this century have meaning outside the frontiers of Greece. Nevertheless, while the particular nature of Greek bourgeois indifference, bickering, and envy account for most of the starters, the few that come through emerge, like Seferis himself, with a timelessness and purity that make the provincialism of the contemporary situation irrelevant.

The Greek writer may have—or at least have had until last May—a certain political freedom and a noble inheritance, but that, today, is about all he has got. Nowhere is his economic plight more severe, his audience narrower. Seferis' poem *The Thrush* puts it simply:

The houses that I had they took from me. It happened
The times were out of joint. Wars, waste and exiles.
Sometimes the hunter gets the birds of passage,
Sometimes he does not get them. There was in my time
Good hunting. Burst of fire took a heavy toll.
The others turn round and round or go mad in the shelters.

And when, further on in the same poem, he writes

It is like
At the end of your youth you happen to be in love
With a woman who has kept her beauty

it is only to remind of the hazards of the past, the nagging ghosts, even "the kiss betraying you to other beds." For precious as the prize is, it is the more so precarious. Greeks know this, perhaps better than anyone, and one of Seferis' main themes, in this volume and in his poems, is an insistence on self-knowledge, on awareness of the "permanent element" of deception and derision that he finds in Cavafy and which can only be held at bay, since "there is no saving faith," by "faith in art." In the same memorable essay on Cavafy he talks about listening to what is actually said by his work—as opposed to "scholastic gossip"—"this work in which, drop by drop, he spent his own self, with all his senses."

There is no scholastic gossip in these reflections of Seferis about his art and the art of his fellow-countrymen, but there is a profound sense of the "drop by drop" by which writers spend their own selves. To read Seferis is to gain admittance to a family circle, perhaps the most intimate, but, taking the long view, rewarding one of all.

Alan Ross

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THEATRE

Hits, Runs, Errors

By Henry Popkin

I KNOW how difficult it is to maintain accuracy in a reference book dealing with the theatre, since I have had a hand in such a book myself, but the proportion of error, absurdity, and bad judgment in the Third Edition of *The Oxford Companion to the Theatre*[1] far exceeds any legitimate expectation. Since the appearance of the First Edition, the editor, Miss Phyllis Hartnoll, has had sixteen years to correct errors and otherwise to learn from experience. She has had the good fortune to work with many eminent collaborators, and I have little quarrel with their signed articles; but, when Miss Hartnoll takes a turn herself, the results are frequently very bad. Perhaps I can perform a small service simply by ceasing to sermonise and reporting oddities within appropriate categories.

PROBLEMS OF ATTRIBUTION: The Supplement to the 1957 edition contains an article on Poland by Boleslaw Taborski, who has since become Jan Kott's translator. This article is now reprinted with small additions—the first paragraph is identical, twelve words are added to the second, twelve more to the third, and so on—but Mr. Taborski gets no credit at all. Some bits of the 1951 entry on Czechoslovakia still appear in the present entry, but the original author, Petr Lotar, gets no credit. In the Addenda and Corrigenda of 1957 appears a brief description by A. E. Wilson of Nikita Balieff, correcting previous information; this account appears verbatim, with one word added, without quotation marks, and with no acknowledgement to Wilson. Kenneth Macgowan's 1957 correction of the entry on the Theatre Guild gets the same treatment in 1967, again with one word added. The unsigned entry on Finland in the 1957 Supplement is reprinted with very little change—mainly the addition of three sentences. Its information was originally credited to "Dr. von Frenckell and J. B. Olli" of "the Finnish Embassy in London." Now, the only acknowledgement to any Finnish source is made in the Preface to "Madame Ester-Margaret von Franckell." (Might Dr. von Frenckell also be Madame von Franckell? I cannot tell.) In that same 1957 Supplement, the entry on Ethiopia is unsigned, but information from Miss Olivia Hasler is acknowledged. The entry reappears in 1967 with no change but is now attributed to Olivia Hasler. The 1957 Supplement has entries on "Toby" and "George Spelvin," unsigned but with information attributed to Robert Downing. Both entries are reprinted in 1967, the first with one sentence added, and Mr. Downing is listed as their author. In the new list of contributors, Mr. Downing's name gets an asterisk to identify him as a new contributor, but Miss Hasler's gets none.

CURIOUS TREATMENT OF DRAMA CRITICISM. The 1967 edition has no entries on the three most influential critics in the English-speaking world, Harold Hobson, Kenneth Tynan, and Walter Kerr; but a new entry on Henry Hewes, of the *Saturday Review*, now appears for the first time. The entry on Joseph Wood Krutch is unaltered since 1951, except for a brief cut, and so he is represented as still the drama critic of the *Nation*, although he retired more than a dozen years ago. He is said to have written "perhaps the fairest evaluation of O'Neill's work," when the essay in question might more accurately be called the most laudatory evaluation. Harold Clurman is dealt with almost exclusively as a director, and no reference is made to his long service as drama critic of the *Nation*. Robert Kemp is said to have written for *Le Temps* after World War II, when, in fact, *Le Temps* no longer existed and Kemp wrote for *Le Monde*.

The article on Dramatic Criticism has some new paragraphs. The first of them quotes J. C. Trewin to the effect that a critic should be able to like anything and continues:

> In recent years, however, the controversial plays of Brecht, Beckett, and the so-called New Movement have severely tested this ideal. Trewin, A. V. Cookman, and J. C. Lambert have maintained it with some reservations, whereas younger critics have frankly declared a preference for certain types of play.

There follow references to Hobson and Tynan, evidently as examples of "younger critics." I am compelled to add: Trewin's principle is extremely dubious. What on earth is the New Movement? Cookman died in 1962. J. C. Lambert is actually J. W. Lambert. Far from being a younger critic, Hobson is 63, older than Trewin or Lambert.

Next come two paragraphs regretting the departure of an earlier generation of American critics and putting the death of Stark Young among events that "changed the New York critical scene completely," although Young retired long before his death at 82. His successors on the *New Republic*, Harold Clurman, Eric Bentley, and Robert Brustein, are not named

[1] *The Oxford Companion to the Theatre*. Edited by PHYLLIS HARTNOLL. Oxford University Press, 75s.

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here. More remarkable than the misprinting of John McCarten's name as "McGarten" is the reference to the death of the *Herald Tribune* in 1966, with no indication that Stanley Kauffmann became drama critic of the New York *Times* at the beginning of that year or that Kerr succeeded him a few weeks after the *Herald Tribune* died. The end of 1964 was the deadline for the present edition, but, obviously, this entry received some late, if incomplete, corrections.

CURIOUS TREATMENT OF RUSSIAN THEATRE: The 1951 edition would occasionally end an unsigned entry on a Soviet dramatist or director with a hopeful observation about his future. These statements were retained in 1957, including the remark that Trenev "may yet do better," but Trenev's death in 1945 was finally recorded. Although all such statements are omitted in 1967, Trofimov's speech in *The Cherry Orchard* beginning "All Russia is our garden" is still said to be "an astonishingly and fiercely accurate prediction of the Russian Revolution." The 1951 edition justified Meyerhold's loss of his theatre and listed him as being still alive. In 1957, his death in 1943 is recorded. In 1967, the year of his death becomes "?1943," and his dismissal is no longer defended. "The date, place, and manner of his death" and his wife's are said to be "unknown," but the reader is referred to a book in which John Mason Brown paraphrases a familiar account of Meyerhold's disappearance and his wife's death. Surely no one, except *The Oxford Companion*, now questions that Meyerhold was purged and his wife brutally murdered in 1939 by unknown intruders. Mayakovsky's suicide is ignored (as Kleist's is—but only in the 1967 edition), although it is as significant as Raimund's suicide and certainly more important than Charles Frohman's death on the *Lusitania*. The optimistic tone of the general articles on Russia and Hungary make a curious contrast with the cooler approach of the entries on Rumania and Bulgaria. In Rumania, the theatre is "an important instrument of propaganda," but, in Hungary, it is said, more euphemistically, to be "a valuable instrument for the preservation and dissemination of cultural ideas."

Gorky's *Yegor Bulichev* is twice said to be his last play and once said to be his next-to-last play; the latter statement is correct. Vishnevsky's *Unforgettable 1919* (a reference to the year) is incorrectly listed as *The Unforgettable 1919th*. *Revizor* is given as an alternate title for Gogol's *The Inspector General* without any indication that it is a transliteration of the original title. Evgenyi Shwartz gets a mere ten lines in which no reference is made to his most admired writings, his plays for adults.

AN ECCENTRIC BIBLIOGRAPHY. One might make a rather good bibliography just by listing books omitted from this one—Eric Bentley's *The Playwright as Thinker* and his two volumes of *New Republic* reviews, Martin Esslin's *The Theatre of the Absurd*, John Russell Taylor's *Anger and After*, the two fullest biographies of Shaw (including Archibald Henderson's authorised biography), the critical studies of Shaw by Bentley and G. K. Chesterton, the biography of Synge by David H. Greene and Edward M. Stephens, David Krause's study of O'Casey, the various volumes of Chekhov's letters (of which not one is listed), Ernest Simmons' biography of Chekhov, Koht's biography of Ibsen. Shaw's *Our Theatres in the Nineties* is listed (as well it might be), and so are three volumes of selections from it, with no indication that they are based on the other book. One of these volumes, *Plays and Players*, is listed twice, although we are told that "books are entered once only." "An attempt has been made to give the most recent edition," but Barrett H. Clark's *European Theories of the Drama* (without "ed." to indicate Clark's function) is dated 1947, with no reference to the revised edition that (forgive me!) I edited in 1965, though several books published in 1965 and 1966 are listed.

A FRENCH HODGEPODGE. The French title of Beckett's *Happy Days* is twice given incorrectly. Genet's name is incorrectly spelled Genêt. Reference is made to Pitoëff's two years of amateur activity in St. Petersburg, but nothing is said of his subsequent, and more important, six years of directing in Switzerland. Jules Romains' very free adaptation of *Volpone* is described as "an excellent translation." Planchon is spoken of as "visiting Paris in 1959 at the invitation of Jean-Louis Barrault," when, in fact, that visit occurred in 1960. Planchon's productions of the two parts of *Henry IV* are twice spoken of as if they were one play. In the Sartre entry, the original title of one listed play, *Les Séquestrés d'Altona*, is omitted, and another play, *Kean*, if they were one play. In the Sartre entry, the *La Putain respectueuse* is criticised as inexact, but it is not noted that the recommended English title is the one used in America. Four plays by Labiche are named, and two are said to "have been translated into English"; as a matter of fact, all four are easily available in English.

A BRITISH JUMBLE. Robert Greene's *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* is said to be "now lost," although the play exists and is to be found in the Mermaid Greene and elsewhere. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* is dated 1589, and nothing is said of the present scholarly preference for 1592, although that preference is shared by Harbage's *Annals of English Drama*, which is listed in the

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bibliography. On page 195, John Fletcher is said, incredibly, to have practised the comedy of humours, but, on page 324, he is associated with "manners" and his collaborator, Francis Beaumont, incredibly, with "humours." Middleton and Rowley are said to have been at their best when they worked together, "particularly" and "notably" in *The Changeling*, but no other instance of their collaboration is cited. Two revivals of Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem* are mentioned, but not a word is said of John Clements' 1949 production, which holds the all-time endurance record for London revivals of classics.

Eliot's *Sweeney Agonistes* is not listed among his plays. Peter Brook is said to have directed, in 1962, the *Marat/Sade*, "by a young German dramatist, Peter Weiss." The year was 1964, and Weiss was then 47; listing as German this Swedish subject who was born a Czechoslovak citizen is a practice so common that it may well pass without further comment. *Epitaph for George Dillon* is attributed solely to John Osborne, instead of being identified as a product of collaboration. John Whiting is alleged to have based *The Devils* "on a novel by Aldous Huxley"; *The Devils of Loudun* happens to be an historical work by Huxley. Wrong dates are given for Coward's *Sail Away*, Rattigan's *Separate Tables*, and Pinter's *The Caretaker*. Anthony Quayle is said to have played Dillon in *The Right Honourable Gentleman*, when, of course, he played Dilke.

ELONGATED TITLES. A superfluous definite article is twice added to Wedekind's *Erdgeist*, and a superfluous indefinite article is three times added to O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*.

FAILURE TO KEEP UP TO DATE. The last German play mentioned in the entry on Germany is dated 1947; the entry goes on to examine two Swiss dramatists, thereby invading the province of the piece on Switzerland. The last Danish play under "Denmark" is 1943, the last Norwegian play under "Norway" is 1936, and the last Swedish play under "Sweden" is 1941. Of the five men listed, in the present tense, among Poland's "outstanding scenic designers," the first three died in 1933, 1963, and 1961 respectively. The two co-directors of the theatre in Nowa Huta would have left for Warsaw by 1963. Many entries remain untouched since 1951, with strange results. The entry on the Theatre Guild, corrected only by Macgowan's unacknowledged help, still holds that the Guild "maintains its high standard and its preference for what is new and unusual in the world's theatre." This statement was doubtful in 1951; it is ludicrous in 1967. We are required to assume that nothing happened to Maurice Evans and Eva Le Gallienne since 1951 or to George S. Kaufman from 1951 till his death a decade later. The entry on the Comédie Française is untouched; we can read elsewhere of the loss of the Odéon in 1959, but the shake-up of 1959–60 goes unrecorded.

MISCELLANEOUS. In 1967, as in 1951, Henry James is said to have written "no more for the stage" after the failure of *Guy Domville*, and, again, Leon Edel is complimented for his edition of James's plays. Mr. Edel's book is even better when one looks inside—and finds five plays, a monologue, and a rough draft for a play, all written after *Guy Domville*.

The entry on Berlin does not mention the return of Piscator. The entry on Piscator says that "he was to have settled" at "a new Volksbühne." The *Companion* omits his installation at the Freie Volksbühne, although it records his death in 1966. Also, he taught at the New School for Social Research, not the School for Social Research.

Büchner's *Woyzeck* is not named but only alluded to as "dramatic fragments" on which the opera *Wozzeck* is based. Schnitzler's *Reigen* (now better-known as *La Ronde*) is mentioned under Austria but not under Schnitzler. Two plays by Sukhovo-Kobylin and one by Molnar (the one that is possibly "the most charming") are discussed but, curiously, not named.

Tennessee Williams' Blanche DuBois is said, incorrectly, to be "drug-crazy." *Three Men on a Horse*, by John Cecil Holm and George Abbott is, on page 972, attributed to Abbott alone, but, on page 2, it is stated that Abbott often wrote "in collaboration." Holm's name is nowhere mentioned.

The entry on Italy has, in the modern period, no material on theatre, as opposed to drama, and it differs from corresponding national articles in this respect—perhaps because its author lives in Australia, at some distance from the Italian theatre. Giorgio Strehler, the great director of the Piccolo Teatro of Milan, is mentioned only as having directed the Piccolo's first production in 1947. Beolco's plays are said to have been "translated into French"; nothing is said of the English version.

We are told that "two extant plays are doubtfully assigned to" Cyril Tourneur. *The Revenger's Tragedy* is doubtful, but *The Atheist's Tragedy* is not. Restoration comedy is described as "intellectually remote from reality"; recent scholarship has been much concerned to demonstrate Restoration comedy's firm links with reality. *The Importance of Being Earnest* is called "the last true English comedy," and Wilde, in writing it, is said to have "returned

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to the pure formula of Congreve." Did Shaw not write true English comedies? But he was Irish. And so was Wilde. Coward, Maugham, and St. John Hankin are English, and so I submit *Hay Fever*, *The Circle*, and *The Return of the Prodigal* as comedies that are equally true and possibly more English. Also, nothing that Congreve (another Irishman!) wrote is nearly so farcical as *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Different formula.

The correct date for Kleist's *Die Familie Schroffenstein* is not 1793 (when Kleist was 16) but 1803. The play of Grabbe's that has elicited most interest in recent years, *Jest, Satire, Irony and Deeper Significance*, manages not to be mentioned in the Grabbe entry. A mysterious reference to Gogol's *The Mother* must surely be meant to apply to Gorky's novel. The entry on Expressionism treats only the German-language variety, with a glance at Strindberg as a forerunner, but without a word about Eugene O'Neill and other American expressionists. Ionesco's *The Lesson* is said to demonstrate the "efficacity" of language "as a physical weapon." True, the professor is teaching his pupil the word "knife" when he knifes her, but one may question whether that makes the word itself a weapon. "Lives of Jesus and St. Paul" are attributed to Sholem Asch. No, both those books are novels.

Jerome Kilty and Cavada Humphrey are said to have acted in Mr. Kilty's *Dear Liar* in both London and New York during the same season. It was Katharine Cornell and Brian Aherne who did the play in New York. The New York City Centre is said to have a permanent drama company, which, alas, it does not have. Douglas Campbell, a native of Scotland now residing in Minneapolis, is identified as a Canadian. Billie Burke's autobiography, *With a Feather on My Nose*, is retitled *With a Feather in My Nose*, a slight (if inaccurate) improvement.

I COULD GO ON at random. *Die versunkene Glocke* is attributed to "the later Hauptmann," who was 34 when he wrote it and lived to be 84. On page 47, the name should be Cooper, not Gooper. On page 940, the name is Tabori, not Tabari. The departure of Voskovec and Werich for America is recorded, but Werich's return to Prague is ignored. The Noël Coward play at the National Theatre was *Hay Fever*, not *Private Lives*. Not a word is said of Beckett's Irish birth; he is described only as "French," and he is the subject of a singular misinterpretation: "All his work is dominated by memories of the horror of the concentration camp and extermination plant."

I might complain that this *Companion* is no boon and ask whom it is intended to accompany. I am sure there are many sound entries, but who can know which they are?

A Decision

It is like breaking out
of a nightmare,—you doubt
the innocence of your
bedroom; the furniture
still has hideous life
lingering in it—if
you don't pretend slumber
it will tear you member
from member. Foolish, of
course, to lie still and stiff,
and yet you don't arise
for ages, and your clothes
nibble you as you dress
for the day's harmlessness.

Tony Connor

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Why Newspapers Have Readers

"You will find an exciting newspaper with a scope, quality and depth of material you have never found in your own daily.... You will find a paper that, instead of resisting change, initiates *it. A paper willing to experiment with layout and typography to make the physical act of reading a pleasure.... In a dramatically changing country, a dramatically changing newspaper...."*

THE HYPERBOLE employed to set the Old Lady of Blackfriars swinging is not my present concern. But *The Times*' face-lift, and the subcutaneous eruptions elsewhere in Fleet Street, prompt me to raise a question about my own trade which goes deeper than cosmetics: What is a daily newspaper for?

Before I am chivvied by Cudlipps and bullied by Berrys, and reminded that every editor in the business (including my own) likes nothing better than a staff meeting at which he can, yet again, define what the *Mirror* or the *Express* or the *Guardian* is, and why it appeals to the people it does, I should explain that my question is prior: what is it that newspapers as such do for their readers? And I mean what they do now, not what they did once. Because newspapers have been so deeply involved in the historic question of English liberty and democratic values, it is too easily assumed that the function which they perform has not basically changed since 1785—when the *Times* was founded with a maximum output of 200 hand-printed sheets an hour, and when the total number of daily newspapers produced in Britain during a year was roughly equivalent to the number produced now in a day. Nor is it by any means axiomatic that nothing essential has changed since 1896, when Northcliffe launched the first popular daily (the *Daily Mail*) and garnered in what the official *History of The Times* aptly and a mite jealously describes as "the rapidly growing army of acquisitive, inquisitive, imperialistic white collar workers." In 1967 newspaper *entrepreneurs* are having to consider afresh what a modern newspaper is for; where it fits into a pattern increasingly shaped by newer media, and into types of social awareness which owe nothing to Northcliffe.

From the consumer's point of view, four main functions of a newspaper can be isolated. It structures people's time; it orders their experience; it provides detailed, up-to-date, accurate, and accessible market information; and it satisfies in some degree the human appetite for novelty (which is not to be confused with news).

AFTER TWENTY YEARS' ADDICTION to newspapers and ten years' direct involvement in them, I feel that the time-structuring aspect of newspaper-reading is the one most apt to be neglected by journalists themselves. Obliged to read several newspapers as soon as they are published (though I do know one journalist who always reads two-year-old newspapers on his way to work and finds that time is a splendid selector), they do not easily enter imaginatively into the circumstances and preoccupations of their readers. The men whose business it is to advertise newspapers know better: hence those ads, humiliating to journalists, which try to sell one London evening rather than the other not by content but by size and shape. Journalists only consider their readers in accepting, more willingly than dons or politicians, the discipline of making themselves comprehensible, relevant, and short. Thus, Arthur Christiansen used to ask *Express* men to write for "the man in a back street in Derby," and it was good advice. Any newspaper, however serious, values highly the man on the staff who can put himself where the reader sits, who knows instinctively when it is necessary to explain or amplify and when a running story is its own explanation.

But even sympathetic identification of this kind may not be enough without an understanding of the role which the process of newspaper-reading plays in the customers' lives. Newspaper-reading, I believe, is essentially a pastime, as defined by Dr. Eric Berne in his *Games People Play* (1966):

> a series of semi-ritualistic, simple complementary transactions arranged round a single field of material, whose primary object is to structure an interval of time.

Dr. Berne was of course referring to inter-personal transactions—the basic good-morning-how-are-you's of social intercourse. Newspaper-reading, by contrast, is perhaps more often used as a device for avoiding social intercourse. But the ritualistic, habit-forming

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element remains. English people read an extraordinary number of newspapers, and are extraordinarily loyal to their own. The *News Chronicle*, in the years when it was succumbing to managerial sclerosis, was barely competitive, but it was much mourned on its demise. The *Guardian*'s recent difficulties evoked numerous offers from readers to buy two copies a day instead of one. (How could one explain to them that if they liked to send us the money, that would be fine, but that printing an extra copy, thanks to the industry's Erewhonish economics, got us almost nowhere?) The reason for this loyalty is that a man reading his morning paper in a tube is conducting a daily ritual transaction with a corporate personality whom he may well find more congenial than either the wife he has just left at the breakfast table or the colleague he is about to greet in the office. For the wife herself, trapped in her suburban box, the newspaper may be the sole adult personality whom she encounters during her working day. It provides—I quote an actual testimony—"ever-renewed, never-fulfilled hope of finding that morning the dress, the idea, the book, the recipe which will dispel, for that day at least, all sense of personal inadequacy. . . ."

IT IS THEREFORE very important that the perusal of the newspaper should structure the right interval of time: not too little, not too much. This reflection saves me from what would otherwise be professional resentment when people complain in times of advertising stringency that their paper is "thin" and that there's "nothing in it." If it is well edited, a paper is often more compact and readable at 12 pages than at 24. But that is no good if it structures the wrong amount of time. In the leisurely, automated future every day might begin to feel like half an hour at the hairdresser's with only the Saturday edition of the *Sun*. This situation is pressed to the point of nightmare in David Campton's play *Little Brother, Little Sister*, which depicts a boy and a girl and the old family cook living in a deep shelter years after the nuclear holocaust, with only a page from the vanished *Daily Express* to serve as Bible, encyclopaedia, and householder's vade-mecum.

Lord Thomson's newspaper-manufacturing policy, first with the *Sunday Times* and now with the *Times*, rests on the psychological assumption that the danger of surfeit is too remote to care about, at least when you are the market-leader. Certainly the appetite grows by what it feeds on, and one of the current danger signals for daily newspapermen is the sight of fellow passengers in the tube still ploughing through the Sunday review sections on Tuesday morning. For those British papers which have little chance of ever tapping really rich advertising markets, the main hope must be that the threshold of resistance to a huge weight of advertisements, pushed apart by tediously padded-out editorial, is lower here than in America. (The Sunday edition of the *New York Times*, weighing about three pounds, is made to be thrown away almost unread. A single copy, incidentally, uses enough newsprint to supply the present consumption of an average African for twenty-five years.)

It is equally important that the newspaper should stimulate the reader without actually outraging him. People vary in the extent to which they are prepared to be contradicted by their newspapers, and newspapers vary in their willingness to risk such contradiction. Newspapers have the advantage over television in that they are expected to provide a corporate point of view, pungently expressed, but for sound psychological reasons they generally reflect rather than mould the unspoken opinions of their readers. The purpose of the ritual transaction between the newspaper reader and his chosen partner is mutual stroking rather than cuffing. The reader uses it to locate himself in a particular sub-group of society, holding an identifiable social ethos. (Hence the use which sociologists are able to make of newspaper-readership as a class denominator.)

THIS BRINGS ME to the second function of a newspaper, which is to order our experience, and through our own, the experience of the tribe. As Marshall McLuhan remarks in *Understanding Media* (1964), "The first item in the press to which all men turn is the one which they already know about," whether it is a football match, a concert, or a mining disaster. This is true even—or perhaps especially—when the reader is convinced before he turns the page that the account of the event in which he has been involved will be inaccurate or hostile. It is true even when people have not themselves directly experienced the event in question, but only lived through it vicariously on television the night before. It is fortunate indeed for newspapers that this is so. Television has changed, though not enough, the style in which events already known to the public are recapped and amplified for newspaper readers in the morning. "Depth analysis" has become more fashionable, and there has been one more trivialising change. Between television and radio shutdown and the time in the early hours when the final editions of popular papers go to press, almost any remotely newsworthy event is given disproportionate prominence because it restores to these newspapers their vanishing function of telling the reader something he does not know. (The *Times* news team, we are told, will be "making their maximum effort from 9 p.m. in

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the evening until the small hours of the next morning.") When everything that happened after the last editions of the evening papers was hidden from the public until the morning, comparative news values could (at least in theory) be a little saner.

However, television has hardly changed at all the actual criteria by which an event is adjudged worthy of newspaper notice. One recalls two moments in the last three or four years when people in Britain felt tied to their television sets by a news event: the assassination of President Kennedy and the engulfing of the Aberfan school. The same people's appetite for newspapers was magnified by their viewing. This pattern is repeated in far less momentous happenings, and this is why a national paper's news editor is generally indifferent when beaten to a story by radio or television, to which all his readers will have had access, but furious if beaten by a rival newspaper, which the vast majority of his readers will never pick up. The reason, says McLuhan, is central to any understanding of media: "Experience translated into a new medium liberally bestows a delightful playback of earlier awareness." It occurs to me that the preaching of evangelical revivals was based on this insight. You were converted, and then through another medium—the pulpit, or the congregational hymn—you heard over again what it was like to be converted.

Naturally, the newspaper does more than simply feed back in an agreeable way a man's own direct or vicarious experience. Other people have had other experiences, and out of the ruthless, highly wasteful process of selection that takes place in every newspaper office there emerges a pattern which appeals precisely because it is a pattern, a triumph of the human mind over anarchy. Each individual experience has been incorporated like a tile into a mosaic whose final shape some individual editor or small group has already partially visualised. A person's choice of newspaper will depend not only on his preference for words or pictures but on the degree of patterning which his mind and personality are capable of absorbing and retaining. To the *Express*, everything comes as a surprise, a present from the inexhaustible galaxy of random happenings. The excitement of the *Express* on its good days stems very largely from its ability to mirror the way its readers themselves experience events as unpredictable in onset, inexplicable except through an identifiable person's fault or virtue, and once past forgotten. The strength of the *Times* or the *Telegraph*, on the other hand, lies largely in their ability to find room for the day's small, unobtrusive contribution to a long-running story that from time to time will burst on to the front pages. This practice reduces the apparent randomness of the world's events, and satisfies the educated, conservative reader's longing to find order in his universe.

IT HAS ALSO BEEN noted by both McLuhan and Daniel Boorstin that newspapers, by the inquiries they make and much more by the very technology they employ, create the communal experience which they exist to describe. Both writers quote the "announcement to readers" in the first American newspaper, Benjamin Harris' *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick*, published in Boston on 25 September 1690. Faithfully reflecting the 17th-century Puritan view of Providence, the journal was "to be furnished once a month (or if any Glut of Occurrences happen, oftener)...." Since then, Professor Boorstin comments, "We need not be theologians to see that we shifted responsibility for making the world interesting from God to the newspaperman." "Today's press-agent," says McLuhan, "regards the newspaper ... as a painter does his palette and tubes of pigment; from the endless resources of available events, an endless variety of managed mosaic effects can be attained." (Boorstin less charitably calls these effects "pseudo-events.") It seems a pity that in England native commentators—like Mr. Raymond Williams in his book on *Communications* (1966)—were so slow in advancing beyond such obvious aspects of newspapers as the proportionate space which they devote to different types of news and features.[1] Newspapermen are always quarrelling among each other about these proportions, but academic critics of the press would serve the consumer's interest better by evolving techniques for source and form criticism of newspapers, and by enabling ordinary people to calculate which story is a pure discovery, which a pure public-relations gambit, and which an adroit piece of news-management by a politician or businessman or civil servant with a much better story to hide than the one he has chosen to tell.

However, it is only fair to take into account, as Boorstin and McLuhan do, the technological factors which compel us to order our communal experience in these roundabout, apparently shady, ways. It is not essentially the consumer, but the technology, that is insatiably hungry for round-the-clock space-filling in newspapers, television, and radio. I irritated Sir William Haley, in a group discussion the other day, by suggesting that the dominant motive in every newspaperman's mind was nothing more spiritual than the compulsion to "feed the

[1] See also Raymond Williams' essay in *Your Sunday Paper*, edited by Richard Hoggart (*ABC* Television and University of London Press, 6s.).

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machine." If I had not thought I was right before, the *Times'* new business section would have convinced me of it. But as nature abhors a vacuum, so does radio abhor silence and a newspaper an unfilled column. The consumer's interest is quite different. At the same discussion Mr. John Lawrence described visiting a pre-electric Aegean island where time had so imprecise a meaning that anything before lunch —whether soon after dawn or just before noon —happened in "τό πρωι." He then returned to London to help organise B.B.C. broadcasts to this island and others like it, knowing that the simple act of broadcasting at a stated hour information which the inhabitants wanted to hear would quite quickly alter their whole pace and concept of existence—a concept which, had they had the option, they might well have liked to preserve. By a development of the same process, the wire-service reporter, serving thousands of different media in different cities or continents with different publishing times, knows that his "story" is never complete. He has to make it look new at each stage for each customer. He has to proceed—as preachers used to be advised to proceed—by saying first what is going to be said; then reporting what has been said (making something, if possible, out of the difference between the expectation and the event); and then stimulating, often quite artificially, some "reaction" from a third party to what was actually said. These infinite regressions, says McLuhan, are the result of electric speed, which in diplomacy "causes the decisions to be announced before they are made in order to ascertain the varying responses that might occur when such decisions actually are made." Indeed, publicity in newspapers—which old Foreign Office hands still find rather distasteful and unprofitable—has in one sense become a substitute for the secret diplomacy which our new sense of human contiguity makes so difficult to operate successfully. The real "open diplomacy" would be conducted person-to-person on television, with global satellite relays; but we have not yet evolved the tribal leaders who could cope with a *panchayat* of this kind; instead, they are reduced to sending each other delphic signals via newspaper columns.

I NAMED the third function of a newspaper as "the provision of detailed, up-to-date, accurate, and accessible market information." Without more technical knowledge than I possess it would be absurd to enlarge on this side of my trade, but it is from this area that the death sentence on newspapers, as a product of a particular epoch of civilisation, will sooner or later be pronounced. British newspapers began as gazettes and advertising sheets before they acquired anything that we would now recognise as an editorial personality, and it is obvious that the press could not survive in its present form if there emerged an alternative means of easy universal access to such diverse daily items of information as the Classified Ads and the Stock Market quotations. Television has eaten some way into the reservoir of display advertising—the iconographic jam on a text newspaper's bread. But it cannot match the newspaper for masses of detailed material, and the chance of reference back to a missed item.

It is clear that newspapers are entering a period of industrial change whose effects will be more far-reaching than the invention of the rotary printing press. Industrial relations permitting, papers should be able by the end of the century not only to print electronically in a dozen different centres simultaneously, but also to abandon printing in the conventional sense. The completed newspapers could drop from a television-like machine at the local newsagent's or even at home if the machine were adaptable to enough other domestic functions to be economic. The cumbrous, expensive, monopolistic and therefore anti-libertarian procedure for manufacturing a product on a large scale and distributing it by courtesy of the railways and W. H. Smith would then have been successfully by-passed, and at first sight it seems that if a "minority" newspaper like my own can survive until technical changes like these begin to work in its favour, civilisation may yet beat Lord Thomson. But progress may yet beat us both, for it is doubtful whether the end product would be much like a newspaper as the school of Northcliffe understood the word. In the computer, the newspaper as a medium of information has another and perhaps more serious rival than television. Once information can be stored, automatically up-dated, and instantly retrieved at the turn of a bedside dial, it becomes unnecessary to buy and peruse a newspaper, in which nine-tenths of the "hard" information is of no interest to a given individual looking for a particular job or stock-price. Once it becomes possible to pre-select the kinds of information—whether editorial or advertising—that you actually want new every morning, the market for a "mosaic" product of wide general appeal will surely shrink.

Newspapers, I argued earlier, can be thought of as corporate personalities able to structure a man's time as agreeably as any of his other acquaintances, but they were able to develop to this point because they had a particular economic usefulness and took a particular technical form. The question for modern newspapers is whether or not they have in their evolution created a demand for them that is self-perpetuating. If this is so, it will be because newspaper-reading has become an aspect of leisure

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rather than work—in short, because newspapers have become "mere" entertainment.[2]

THIS ENTERTAINMENT IS, of course, dependent on the fourth task which newspapers perform for their readers: that is, daily satisfaction of the human appetite for novelty. This appetite should not be confused with an appetite for news, in the old newspaperman's sense of "a Glut of Occurrences." So many professional myths surround the purveying of what newspapers call news that it is hard for someone involved in the business to see the distinction clearly. In the myth, "news" is a spontaneous event which comes as a surprise to the reader. But modern news, as we have seen, is less and less spontaneous. "Man bites dog" is far more interesting—to a newspaper—if the man is already (in Boorstin's phrase) "well known for his well known-ness." Nor is newspaper news very often a genuine surprise, for by the time it is read it is already known to some or all readers, either through the electric media or through the previous week's controlled news leaks.

From the consumer's side, too, the distinction between novelty and news needs to be drawn. Most people cannot bear very much novelty. The apostle Paul, a conservative Jew by upbringing, realised that the people of Athens were unusual in always wanting "to hear or do some new thing." In a modern society, whose economic health depends on frequent, compulsory, and often unwelcome innovation, the consumption of "news" has for millions become a substitute for, even a protection from, the experience of novelty at the level of personal thought and action. There is in fact a pornography of news which—as *Time* magazine (and, later, Mr. Clive Irving) discovered—exerts almost as strong a pull on the reader as pornography of the traditional Fleet Street sort. The currently fashionable staple of this pornography is a bout between two or more public personalities. The outcome is known in advance. The bout is described in exhaustive detail, relished for its own sake rather than for its (assumed) fidelity to what actually occurred. It ends, for the reader, in psychic release, conveyed through the twin illusions of participation and omniscience. It is democracy adapted for masturbation.

DOES THIS, THEN, MEAN that newspapers, as a medium of social exchange, are entering a dying phase? Not necessarily. Shifts of function are endemic to media. Fifty years ago, problems were stated by the newspapers—by campaigning reporters like W. T. Stead—and solved at booklength by the diligence of people like the Webbs. Today television is beginning to be the problem-stating medium, and because it demands instant replies, newspapers have to devote energy to solving these problems rather than to uncovering new ones (which when uncovered, are anyway instantly picked up and given real popular immediacy by television.

The public fuss earlier this year over the television programme *Cathy Come Home* is a good example of the new balance of power as it works in practice. The documentary play said nothing that a reasonably attentive reader of the serious liberal-left press did not already know. But this apart, it had an impact very similar to the combination of Florence Nightingale and William Howard Russell—social reformer and wire correspondent—in the Crimea. McLuhan's comment on that episode is very apposite:

> The electric gives powerful voices to the weak and suffering, and sweeps aside the bureaucratic specialisms and job descriptions of the mind tied to a manual of instructions. The "human interest" dimension is simply that of immediacy of participation in the experience of others that occurs with instant information. People become instant, too, in their response of pity or of fury when they must share the common extension of the central nervous system with the whole of mankind.

Newspapers will only remain indispensable in the future as long as they realise that their bread-and-butter function will be to tidy up, amplify, and canalise these instant human responses; doing for media more immediate than themselves the job which books did (and still do) for newspapers. Naturally, "Gluts of Ocurrences" will continue to occur, sometimes in a form which lends itself much better to typographic than to televisual treatment. Confidential documents will still be obtained and published, to the embarrassment of governments. But the genuine novelty at which serious newspaper journalism aims will gradually become more and more a question of perceiving and communicating connections between known facts, rather than of uncovering new information. (The difference between a good and a bad newspaper library is worth at least half a dozen reporters.)

This process will not be complete until television has learnt how to report and present events as easily, ruthlessly, and unfussily as the newspaper operation now does. This in turn depends partly on structural reforms in broadcasting organisations, partly on technical developments like miniaturisation of camera equipment. But the direction is clear, and in a few years' time, it will be no reproach to a newspaper that it is "a daily magazine."

Christopher Driver

[2] "Newspaper reading... has all the earmarks of play," says William Stephenson in *The Play Theory of Mass Communication* (University of Chicago Press, 1967).

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LETTERS

Parliamentary Frustrations

STANLEY HENIG's forceful article on "The Frustrations of an M.P." [ENCOUNTER, September] contains a mass of true comments and admirable suggestions for parliamentary reforms. But it misleads a little in that many members with a similar background to his own did not have the same expectations nor are they nearly so frustrated (indeed many of them have been absorbed and thrilled by the life).

Few of the 1966 incomers, I suspect, thought that the House was "a place where vital debates were held on vital issues" or that "they would help the Government to make up its mind" by contributing "valuable specialist or lay opinions." If Henig did expect this, he was curiously out of date for a political scientist and one can understand his disappointment. Also, if this was the case, the public would certainly select more able and experienced men to contest elections than the run of present candidates.

I think most of the more realistic entrants knew that the House was principally a factor in the power struggle. M.P.s do not wield power but a Party must win a majority of the seats to gain office and after the election, the House is one place where the leaders on each side state their case and try and establish an advantage which will later be reflected in votes at the next election.

Where, say the frustrated Henigs, does this leave room for the private M.P.? Is he just to sit there for four-and-a-half years? The answer, which explains why so many do become absorbed by the House, is that the Commons is also the place where M.P.s manoeuvre for power within the parties. Realising that only minor influence is possible without office, the able member who wants to make his mark has plenty of scope. He has to show his talents at a variety of levels—a number of but not too many effective speeches in the House, sensible interventions in the private party meetings, a newspaper column, the odd contribution on television. Even for those who are more interested in ideas than in office, being an M.P. upgrades everything one has to say; it ensures a much wider platform.

At the same time the House builds its own controls in that the M.P. who has little judgment, who is simply advertising his own wares, is rapidly discounted. In a curious way and irrespective of party, to obtain respect, to be listened to, an M.P. has to stand for something and have something to contribute.

As a result of these conditions, most members find there is adequate challenge, enough to occupy them. Of the 370 on the Government side, some seventy are ministers and are fully involved with their jobs. Probably at least a hundred and fifty members find fulfilment in having a ringside seat on great events, in helping with the formalities of legislation and in the services they can do for their constituents. This leaves about the same number of members who are trying to establish a claim to promotion or to further the cause of "the Left," to protect their union's interests or to press a few ideas on the Government. The same analysis applies to the Opposition except that more have outside jobs and for the rest the task is to win their laurels as critics of the Government.

I agree with all the reforms Henig proposes but the reason for having specialist committees and for bringing the Commons in at a formative stage in the legislative process is not primarily to keep back-benchers happy. It is, again, in terms of power. Correctly used these devices enable the governing party to impose its policy far more definitely on all sections of a huge Civil Service department than a single minister can. M.P.s could then test the advice given, ensure the research is done, see that all bodies are consulted and that the public is adequately prepared. The object of these reforms is that legislation is well thought out, that the results of policies are carefully checked, in short that the Commons is once again the master of the Whitehall machine. Incidentally they will do much to restore the public's still great expectations of Parliament and to remove the frustrations of Mr. Henig.

JOHN MACKINTOSH

House of Commons

Chaudhuri's India

IN THE September issue of ENCOUNTER, Mr. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, with his flamboyant display of learning and eristic skill, had eight occasions to refer to Western thinkers, books, and mythology. Writing on India, he did not compromise himself by referring to a single Indian thinker, past or present, to support his point. This should make any reader, more so the Indian reader, chary of accepting his argument. But that is a vulgar conclusion. Being a patriotic intellectual, he wanted to cover the shame of the Indian thinkers, who did not even know the "basic civilisation" of India that Mr. Chaudhuri has invented.

There are one or two welcome paragraphs in the article.

> "Therefore a realistic view of the present disturbed state of the country would tend to be that all these more or less barren upheavals are subrational, exasperated, and almost hysterical gestures coming out of a feeling of helplessness. The conditions cannot be improved by any rational course that the people have the mental energy to take, and yet they are unendurable."
>
> "The votes seem to be predetermined in favour of the Congress. Yet the badness of the Party is felt so strongly that the people cannot refrain from giving a wholly aimless and at the same time irresponsible expression of resentment."

If he had concentrated his thought on these insights, he might well have reached the conclusion that the problem of India is the problem of making

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Western social-political thought adequate to the needs of her people on whose principles the Indian state structure is based. The modification and re-casting of Western ideas is a stupendous problem that requires the tremendous creative energy of her intellectuals and masses. Many thinkers, *e.g.* Frantz Fanon, have pointed out the relation between political oppression (or lack of expression) and the violent, hysterical emotionalism of the people. Mr. Chaudhuri's discussion of "inertia" can be usefully carried on in the political-psychological framework, but not on the basis of his improvised history.

I have not the mock-modesty, which would refrain me from suggesting a problem to Mr. Chaudhuri, which is amenable to individual solution and is of professional interest to Mr. Chaudhuri. The traditional Indian aesthetics of "*rasa*-s" (*i.e.* moods) is yet to be reconciled with the Western aesthetics of "experience." An intellectual who cannot help himself, can never be expected to help his country.

S. S. HANS

Southall,
Middlesex

Two-sided Libel Dangers

By Sir Linton Andrews

LORD FRANCIS-WILLIAMS in ENCOUNTER (September 1967) has much to say with which I fully agree on the need for libel law reform. But he and I differ on some important points. If he will look again at what I said in ENCOUNTER (July 1966) he will see that I thought grotesquely inflated damages in libel cases were what troubled newspaper people most. These undoubtedly endanger Press efforts to root out social ills. Among questions I raised were these:

1. May we hope to see the limiting of libel damages to amends for loss so that there should be no more exorbitant and extortionate awards inspired by considerations irrelevant to the questions at issue?

2. Are juries the best tribunals to settle what is defamatory in specific cases, whether there has been malice, and what damages, if any, shall be awarded?

3. Is a maligned citizen who has suffered heavily to be deprived of full redress if the offending paper is thought to have libelled him by mistake and says so in a correction and apology?

Lord Francis-Williams' first point in reply to my questions is a friendly and courteous suggestion that I do not know much about libel cases. But I do. As my credentials are questioned I must produce them, even at the risk of seeming immodest. Sixty-five years' service on newspaper staffs has given me an ample knowledge of newspaper perils, including libel, deaths of newspapers and unemployment due to that and other causes. Libels, above all, have been a constant source of nagging trouble.

My friend says: "In such matters as libel the more important provincial newspaper editors tend to live sheltered lives, the more important the more sheltered. They speak for the best elements in their society. Only rarely if ever do they find themselves down among the blood and heat where the libel actions grow."

This is a quaint notion of what provincial editing means. Although, following the precedent of my predecessor, Arthur H. Mann, I was content and indeed proud to be known as the editor of the *Yorkshire Post*, I was in fact for a good part of my time in the chair also editor-in-chief of our group and dealt with many awkward libel cases. I had five on my hands at one time. We had no lawyer working in the office alongside the sub-editors to watch for dangerous passages in copy or proofs. While editing the *Yorkshire Post* I was also chairman of a Newspaper Society committee ready to give advice to members on their libel problems. Nor have I always been a provincial journalist. Working in London for the *Daily Mail* in Lord Northcliffe's time and before that for the Hulton group I was certainly "down among the blood and the heat where the libel actions grow."

After this necessary personal explanation let us come to the critical question: Should an innocent victim of libel have to suffer lest an innocent libeller should be prevented from exposing genuine cases of public wrong-doing? Conversation clubs and debating societies have often discussed whether it is wrong to do wrong to prevent worse wrong. I imagine the agreed answer is "Yes, but——"; that is to say, that we must be certain that in doing a little wrong we really are preventing a greater wrong.

Lord Francis-Williams, a former financial editor, speaks of City frauds he has known and how the fear of crippling libel damages held off publicity for a time during which many investors suffered serious loss. At that stage, he says, newspapers could not "legally justify warnings"—in plain English, prove guilt. If you cannot prove that a man is guilty are you right to denounce him in the Press as a swindler? Should you then be able to claim qualified privilege to stave off libel damages? Would you choose to escape trouble by printing a correction and apology which you did not honestly believe to be the truth?

Suppose the man was honest and you had made a mistake in thinking otherwise on what seemed

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to be trustworthy evidence?—suppose you had ruined the poor fellow by destroying his reputation and credit—would it be enough to confine redress to a correction and apology?

Lord Francis-Williams answers, "I do not believe that with the safeguard of the requirement to publish an explanation and refutation and make apology if the criticism were shown to be misjudged, damage done to the innocent would be either considerable or lasting." This view seems to me to be too complacent. Does not the innocent victim deserve fair amends for proved loss? I think he does.

Like Lord Shawcross, I believe judges might have more power in libel cases. Lord Francis-Williams seems to be quite happy with the jury system. I am not; but I contented myself with a suggestion that the question should be fully explored. My experience of jurymen and jury-women, so far as it has gone, never made me as certain as most people that trial by jury ensures justice in cases that call for trained, unprejudiced, well-balanced judgment. My experience of juries is, I admit, too limited to warrant an insistent opinion. I think no method of trial is unchallengeably ideal, but I have more respect for our judges than for some juries in some kinds of problems.

FINALLY, Lord Francis-Williams contends that what is implicit in my criticisms of the qualified privilege proposal is the belief that newspapers cannot be trusted and that they would regard a change in the law as an invitation to do what they choose and libel whom they pleased. Now it is difficult to be certain what fears, suspicions, and possibly transient impressions are implicated with one's main articles of faith on some levels of thought, but I believe that almost all our newspapers and almost all our journalists in Britain are trustworthy in that they have no desire whatever to libel and injure the innocent. I believe that almost without exception they would still behave responsibly if the sometimes harshly acting law of libel were reformed or mitigated.

It is true that I have worked for forty years to get journalistic methods of training improved. It is true that I devoted much energy to advocating the founding of the Press Council. But it would be absurd to argue that these activities showed I was distrustful of the Press in general and that I thought all newspapers and all journalists would hasten to libel people if they were given the power to do so without penalty. As a former chairman of the Press Council I have taken part in censuring some papers and some journalists, but these were comparatively few—much fewer than those prejudiced against newspapers would expect.

Still, we must be on guard. Newspapers, as Mr. Cecil King has emphatically stated, are haunted by the libel nightmare. On the other hand, if libel law reform were to favour the Press excessively, innocent people might be compelled to suffer. Lord Francis-Williams often and properly invokes the public interest. The public interest requires us to be as fair as possible to both sides, the innocent libellers and their innocent victims.

Misprint Demon

YOUR JULY ISSUE has an exceptional number of minor errors. Einstein's millionaire friend was Kopper, not Koppel. It was Kao Kang that Mau purged, not Kao Tang, and the number of Poles murdered at Katyn was an order of magnitude greater than 300. GORDON TULLOCK

Thomas Jefferson Center for Political Economy,
University of Virginia,
Charlottesville, Va.

Seduction

UNDERSTANDABLY bewildered by the irrelevance of Mr. John Bryce's letter, Kenneth Allsop has, I think, been too indulgent [ENCOUNTER, September]. It is true that special responsibilities and restraints are involved in the teacher/student relationship. But this is not enough to excuse the hysterical tone of Mr. Bryce's remarks—"seduction" (which, to say the least of it, is inventing parts of the story which are not in the poem), and, still more, the application to the relationship of Mr. Allsop's word "defilement." At the risk of figuring as a fuddy-duddy, Peter-Simple-pilloried progressive, I would maintain that our is indeed a "more decent, kindly, and concerned society" than it would be if Mr. Bryce's attitudes prevailed.

J. C. MAXWELL

Balliol College,
Oxford

"A Lesson in Love"

I HAVE just seen a letter in your September issue from a colleague of mine who appears to be accusing me of seducing one of my girl students. What Mr. Bryce's motives were in making one of his all-too-rare appearances in print I cannot guess; but let me assure him that in this instance his researches are inaccurate. The incident referred to in my poem, "A Lesson in Love," [ENCOUNTER, July] had nothing to do with my work as a university lecturer, and it appals me as a critic that Bryce should have misread the poem in this way. He, after all, has had more opportunity than most to observe my work at close quarters, and on reflection he may feel that he owes me a public apology.

I should not, however, raise such a pother as he does about a staff-student relationship exceeding the bounds of decorum: it happens perpetually, as Bryce and I know—as witness the not uncommon fact of lecturers marrying their female students. I should not regard such a relationship as immoral, necessarily; but in view of the fact that one is as an examiner sitting in judgment, so to speak, upon one's students, it seems to me unprofessional in the extreme.

PHILIP HOBSBAUM

London

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Thanks

PROFESSOR D. W. BROGAN'S otherwise exemplary review of Peter Gay's *A Loss of Mastery* [ENCOUNTER, August] is, I think, gratuitously misleading in its first paragraph. In a literal sense, I suppose, it is true that when publishing this book, a series of lectures, Professor Gay did not "thank" the University of California at Berkeley, at whose collective invitation he came to deliver them in 1966. The point is, however, that Professor Gay *did* single out for thanks, and quite accurately so, Professor Mark Schorer and his colleagues at Berkeley, for having made the occasion possible, as well as Professor William Bouwsma, who evidently permitted him to sleep in a guest bed while there. These much-deserved expressions of gratitude (I was on the Schorer lecture committee at the time) may fall short of being eulogies to the Regents of the University of California. But in fairness to Professor Gay, "we" of the University at Berkeley consider Berkeley as being quite sufficiently thanked, thank you.

PAUL SEABURY

University of California,
Berkeley, California

"In the '20s"

I HAVE BEEN reading Harry Kessler's piece about my mother in the current ENCOUNTER. It is almost unbelievably beside the point! "A person who has never known a moment's embarrassment or any social barrier." She was riddled by shyness, failure to communicate, etc. How odd that such a civilised man should be quite so blind. I wonder how many of his other stray acquaintances he misrepresented.

BENEDICT NICOLSON

London

Past ENCOUNTERS

THE INDIFFERENCE *of Western countries towards India's economic effort bears witness not only to great egoism but also to a lack of foresight. Whatever one may think of the foreign policy of the present Prime Minister, it is neither generous nor intelligent to reply to his neutralist declarations by the suppression or reduction of economic aid. The free world has a major interest in the success of India's economic efforts.*

For some years to come, Nehru's State, successor to the one the English built up after the great Moguls, is not likely to be threatened by a Communist electoral victory. It is threatened only by the disintegration of the party in office. However, as the democratic régime lasts, the masses will be disturbed by the propaganda of the various parties, the economic changes, and the creation of linguistically homogeneous states. Will the democrats be able to hold the masses? Will they manage to eliminate gradually the habits and traditions incompatible with the spirit of industrial civilisation? Will they manage to bring India out of her poverty, free her from the caste system and other superstitions, without appealing impatiently—and futilely—to drastic discipline?

In order to spread certain institutions from one society to another, it is never enough to transfer experts or technical formulas; the essential is to change ways of thinking. Irrigation, factories, and aeroplanes are pitiless to certain beliefs. Machines do not exclude or impose any religion, but if they destroy an old one without giving birth to another, there is a vacuum. Economic development by democratic methods does not only presuppose the efficiency of elected rulers and deliberating assemblies: it also demands men who find the object of their faith and the principles of their morality outside politics. To develop such men, with such faith and principles, is the real challenge to Asia.

RAYMOND ARON

THE INTELLECT *plays almost no part in Christopher Isherwood's scheme. There is an awful passage in* The World in the Evening *when the doctor, Charles, tells Stephen his philosophy of life. It revolves around the idea of a high sort of "camp" which is the mark of true artistic greatness. "High Camp is the emotional basis of the Ballet, for example, and of course of Baroque Art. You see, true High Camp always has an underlying seriousness. You can't camp about something you don't take seriously. You're not making fun of it; you're making fun out of it. You're expressing what's serious to you in terms of fun and artifice and elegance. Baroque is largely camp about religion. The Ballet is camp about love." He goes on to give a list of the great campers—Mozart, El Greco, Dostoevsky, Freud; but not Beethoven, Flaubert, or Rembrandt. This sort of arrant nonsense should never be treated seriously, but I fear it is not only Charles and Stephen who do so, but Isherwood himself. It is a nice, cosy substitute for thought.*

ANGUS WILSON

IT IS DIFFICULT *to believe that "the unerring sentence of time" will be favourable to the Nuremberg tribunal, or to the very paradoxical Allied decision to try the Nazi leaders. We forget the dimensions of the paradox. In the years between the wars few educated people regretted that Lloyd George had been saved by the Dutch Government from his electioneering pledge to try the Kaiser; and the pitiful, nobly endured, but nevertheless unheroic diminuendo of Wilhelm II in exile was held to have pointed the right way to punish war-guilt while avoiding legends. By eliminating the chance of martyrdom Doorn was, in Sir Winston Churchill's fine phrase, "a harder accountancy" than the promised gallows. Had Sir Winston forgotten his own essay on the fallen Kaiser when his Government decided to put the German leaders of 1945 in the dock? Had none of his colleagues studied* La Légende Napoléonienne *and its origins? It would be interesting to know by what steps our rulers entered the trap which Lloyd George had avoided by a stroke of luck.*

CHRISTOPHER SYKES

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